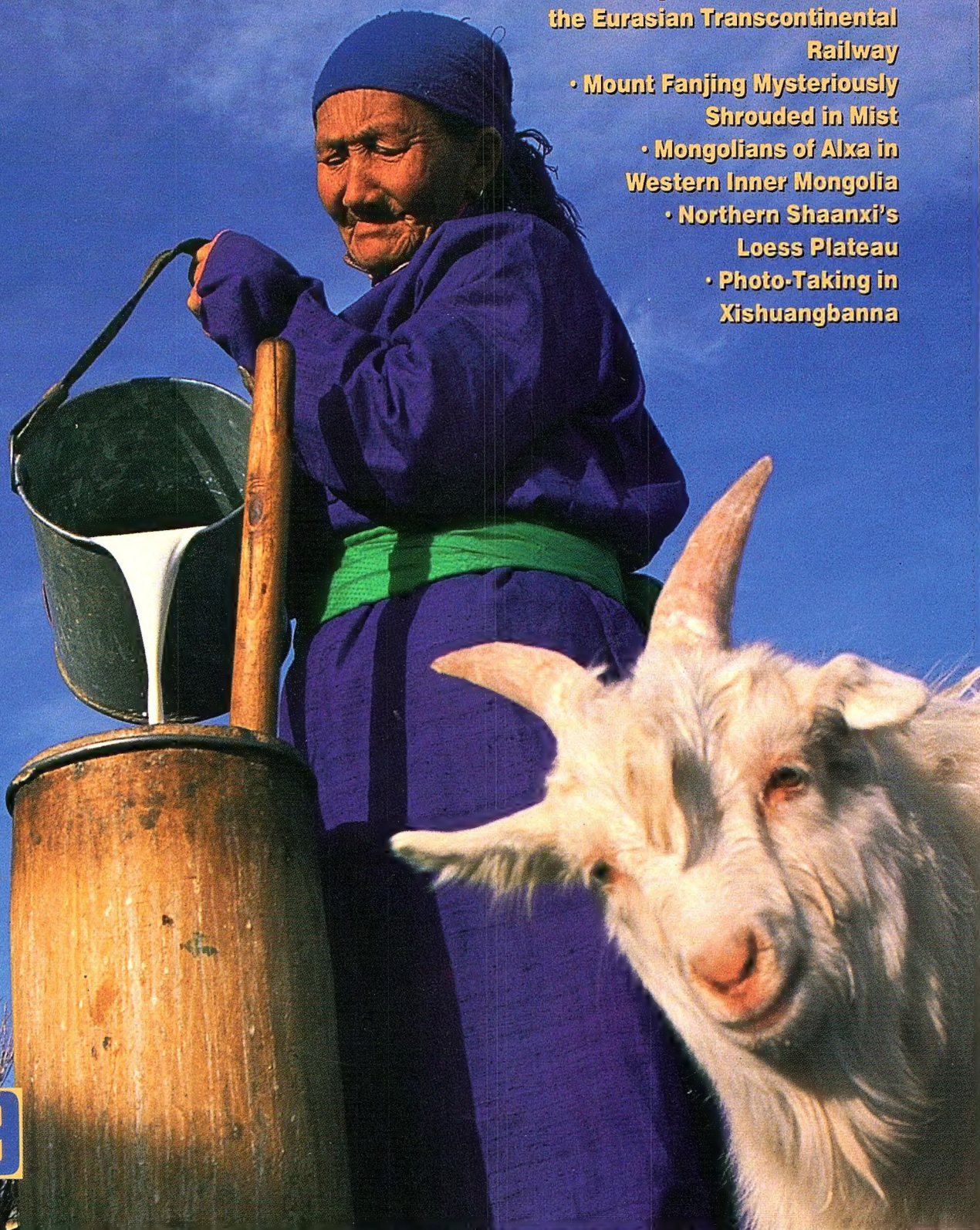


China

T O U R I S M

CHINA-WIDE SPECIAL (I)

- Travelling Across China Along the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway
- Mount Fanjing Mysteriously Shrouded in Mist
- Mongolians of Alxa in Western Inner Mongolia
- Northern Shaanxi's Loess Plateau
- Photo-Taking in Xishuangbanna



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EDITORIAL

Visit China '92 : Ringing in the New Year

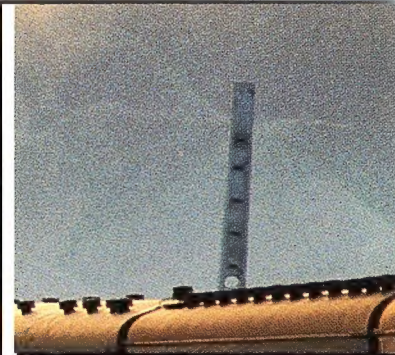
China is a country not only possessing a long civilized history but also embracing a variety of different peoples. In this issue and the following one as well, we take you to areas throughout China to allow you to appreciate the rich diversity that its terrain and population offers. This is an appropriate way to begin the year designated as Visit China '92 by the country's tourist industry.

The first article sets the tone, not only for this article but also for the year-long promotion, as we travel along the Chinese section of the transcontinental railway. The railway has a western terminus at Rotterdam in the Netherlands. We start at the eastern end of the railway located in Lianyungang, Jiangsu. Some 4,000 kilometres later, we finish up at the end of the Chinese section at the Alataw Mountain Pass in Xinjiang. In another story, we also venture to the western part of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, to a place called Alxa, to view Nadam Fair camel races, to enjoy a traditional Mongolian wedding and the birthday celebration of a three-year-old child.

Exploring the loess plateau country of northern Shaanxi, the area which gave birth to Chinese civilization, we are guests of cave dwellers and observe the traditional waist drum and *yangko* dancers. We also visit the Hukou Waterfall where the legendary leader Yu the Great was first said to have tamed the Yellow River.

Moving to the south, Xishuangbanna in Yunnan is justifiably described as a photographer's paradise. Its lush vegetation and undulating terrain combines to form a picturesque background for the colourful ethnic minority peoples living there. On the Sino-Burmese border, Burmese people frequently wade across the border to shop at the local fair at Daluo. More of our keen photographers trek to Mount Fanjing in northern Guizhou to capture some of the dramatic sights and rare flora and fauna in this mist-shrouded mountain with thick virgin forests.

Ringing in the New Year according to both the Lunar and Gregorian calendars, we also provide you with stories about the symbolic significance of monkeys in Chinese tradition to mark this coming Year of the Monkey, according to the Lunar calendar. To celebrate the New Year we are giving you, our subscribers, the accompanying calendar with a photo by our director, Mr. Tchan Fou-li and calligraphy by noted Chinese calligrapher Qi Gong, as a token of our appreciation over the years.



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No. 139 January 1992

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Lunchboxes are a standard form of meal on China's trains.

Travelling Across China Along the Transcontinental Eurasian Railway

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY FENG JIN

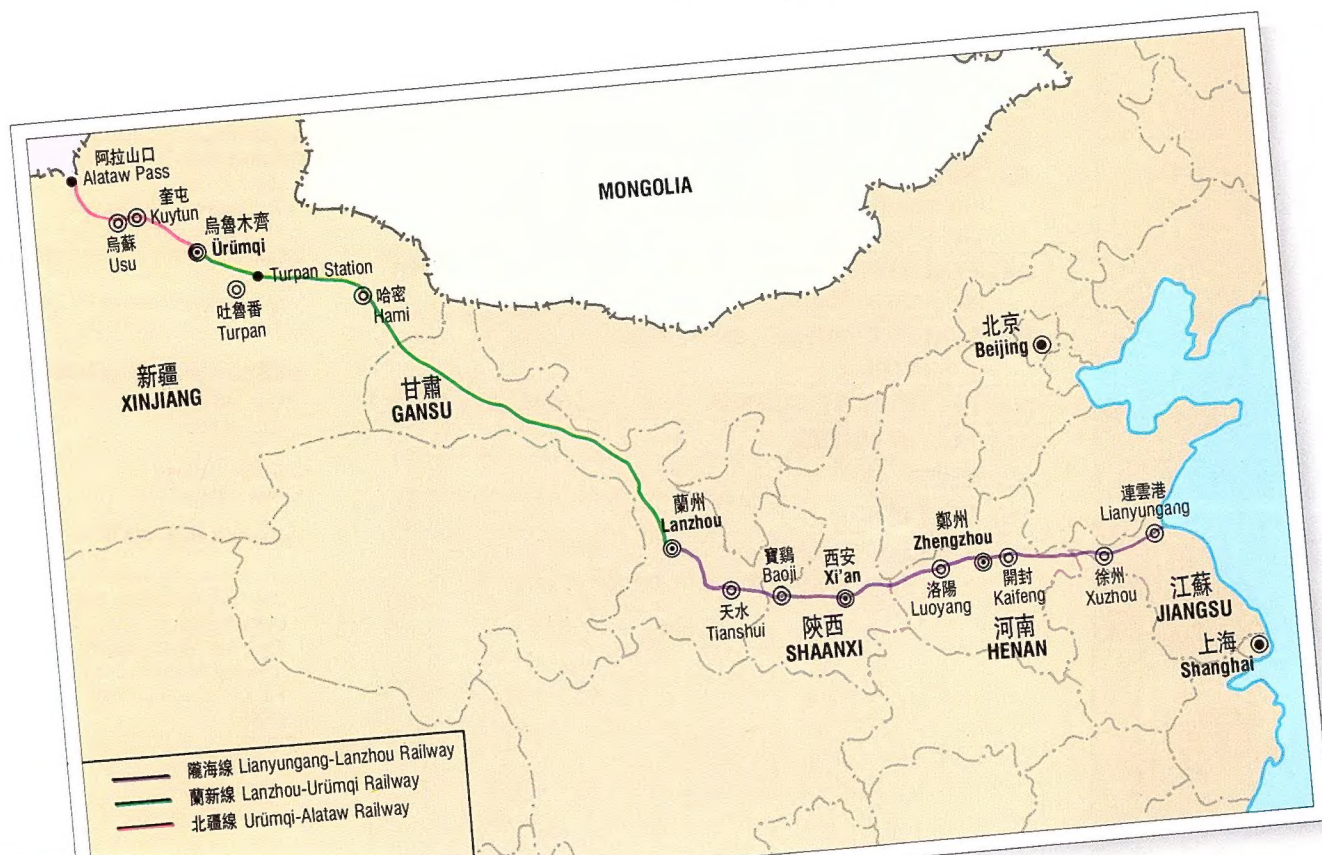
The port city of Lianyungang facing the Yellow Sea is the only port in Jiangsu Province that is ice-free the year round. Significantly, it is also the starting point of a railway connecting Asia with Europe, known as the "Eurasian Land Bridge".

The China section of this railway begins at Lianyungang in the east and ends at Alataw Mountain Pass in Xinjiang in the far west. There it meets the railroad of the Soviet Union, a section that was opened to traffic in September 1989. It then continues westward passing through many countries before it reaches its final destination at Rotterdam, Holland. Totalling 11,000 kilometres, it is 2,000 kilometres shorter than the Trans-Siberian Railway built in the 1930s between Vladivostok and Rotterdam via Moscow. It provides a speedier and more efficient means of land transportation between East Asia and Western Europe.

Last autumn I took a trip in China along this new train route. After travelling along the original Longhai (Lianyungang-Lanzhou) Railway, I continued along the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway to Ürümqi, from where I took the new North Xinjiang Railway to Alataw on the Soviet border. This trip, which took me across the provinces of Jiangsu, Henan, Shaanxi and Gansu as well as Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, covered 4,108 kilometres or two-fifths of the entire Eurasian Transcontinental Railway.

Undoubtedly, the new rail line between Lianyungang and Alataw Mountain Pass is at present China's longest railway. It takes passengers from the coast to the great interior of China through areas of vastly differing climate, populated by peoples of many different minorities, and passes by some of China's most historically well-known cities. Once at Alataw, if the tourist wishes to go on to the Soviet Union, he can take this third rail route linking China and its northern neighbour. The others are the one between Beijing and Moscow via Mongolia and the one to Vladivostok in the northeast.

When travelling, it is important to bear in mind the schedules of the trains since not every place along the route will be passed during the daytime. The best way is to decide carefully on which places to see and which not to see. A well planned trip will leave passengers with colourful memories and an unforgettable experience.



Completion of the last section of the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway at the Alataw Mountain Pass on the Sino-Soviet border means that the railway running from East Asia to Western Europe are at last linked up.





The mist-shrouded harbour at Lianyungang, the eastern terminus of the railway known as the Eurasian Land Bridge.



The train approaches one of the many tunnels on this rail line.



Soon after leaving Lianyungang, the passengers find the tail end of the train curled round at a sharp bend.

In Jiangsu

Lianyungang — An Ice-Free Port

The city of Lianyungang has three railway stations. The one in the centre of the city is called Xinpu, the one in the east in an industrial area is called Xugou and the one in the southwest by the sea is the Port Station which is the actual starting point of the "Eurasian Land Bridge".

Though I could have bought a ticket at Xinpu, I decided to go to the Port Station so that I could satisfy myself by taking the trip from the very beginning of the railway.

Contrary to my expectations, all tickets for sleeper class had been sold out, and so not wanting to wait too long, I bought a hard seat

ticket for the 290/291 Express that would depart at 1:50 the next afternoon and take me to Zhengzhou, Henan.

For those who have some time to spend in Lianyungang, there are quite a few places of scenic and historical interest, among which the most famous ones include the Huaguo (Flower and Fruit) Mountain, the Kongwang (Confucius Sea-Viewing) Mountain and the Xu Fu Village. One story has it that many of the scenes in the novel *Journey to the West*, such as the Water Curtain Cave where the Monkey King, the hero of the novel, lived were supposed to be set here. Temples occupied by demons and monsters were based on what he saw on his visit to the Flower and

Fruit Mountain. Since the Tang Dynasty (618-907), temples from virtually all dynasties have been erected on Huaguo. The 1,300-year-old Sanyuan Temple stands here. The Confucius Sea-Viewing Mountain, three kilometres southwest of Xinpu, received its name because Confucius ascended the mountain twice to view the sea. I went there mostly to see a rich collection of ancient stone inscriptions which with their varied styles of handwriting resemble a true exhibition of ancient calligraphy.

At this ice-free port which remains open throughout the year, I saw many glass bottles for cultivating kelp glittering on the sea surface in the bay.



Market at Pixian

At a large trading market in Pixian, northern Jiangsu, vegetables, fruits, aquatic products and meat are in huge supply. The most eye-catching part is a spacious area for clothing. People push their way among suits and colourful women's garments. One estimate gives a figure of 30,000 to 50,000 visitors here daily.

One reason for the prosperity of the market in Pixian is that people living along the Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway find it convenient to visit the place. The large number of buyers and sellers result in a greater supply of goods for transaction which in turn encourages more people to come, and so it escalates.



Surrounded by his goods, an exhausted man boards the train at Pixian in Jiangsu, one of many going to the market fair.



Outside the station at Xuzhou in Jiangsu a trio waits to meet delegates coming from other places to attend meetings.

A chapter on Emperor Qin Shihuang from *Records of the Historian* which was written between 104 and 91 B.C. says that during the 28th year of the emperor's reign (219 B.C.), he dispatched Xu Fu along with 3,000 young boys and girls to sail out to the sea to look for the magic longevity herb. None of them ever returned. Looking around the bay from where ships go all over the world, I could not help wondering whether this was exactly the place where Xu Fu and his people set out. In Jinshan Town, Ganyu County, in suburban Lianyungang there is a village called Xufu Village which indeed used to be called Xu Fu Village. This is the hometown of Xu Fu.

My train finally pulled out of Lianyungang.

Passengers that got on the train from stations along the way were mostly farmers wearing home-made clothes. With their shirt sleeves and trousers rolled up, they carried heavy loads of local produce, such as food and fruits. It seemed they were content with just being able only to get tickets for standing on the train, so obviously they were on short journeys. In fact they were all going to do business at Pixian where there was a large market.

When we arrived at Pixian, as one lot of passengers rushed off the train, immediately other farmers carrying agricultural produce and daily necessities got on and took over their places. These were the ones that had come to the market early and now had already done their business. They must have been very exhausted, for they sat wherever they could find some space, mostly in the aisle and in the doorways.

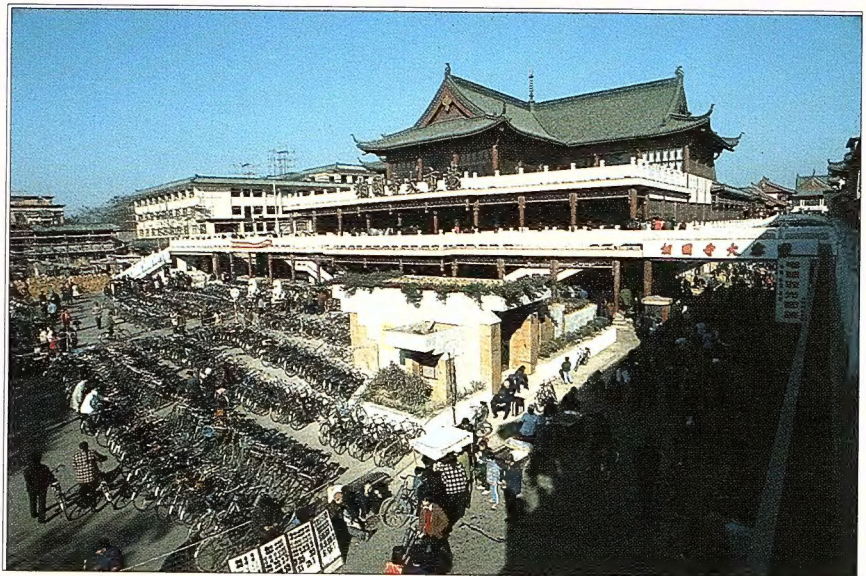
Outside, the train passed a large tract of

The Kaifeng Department Store

Kaifeng, Henan Province, is a city with a history of over 2,000 years. As one of China's six ancient capitals and linked to the Grand Canal it abounds with sites of historical significance.

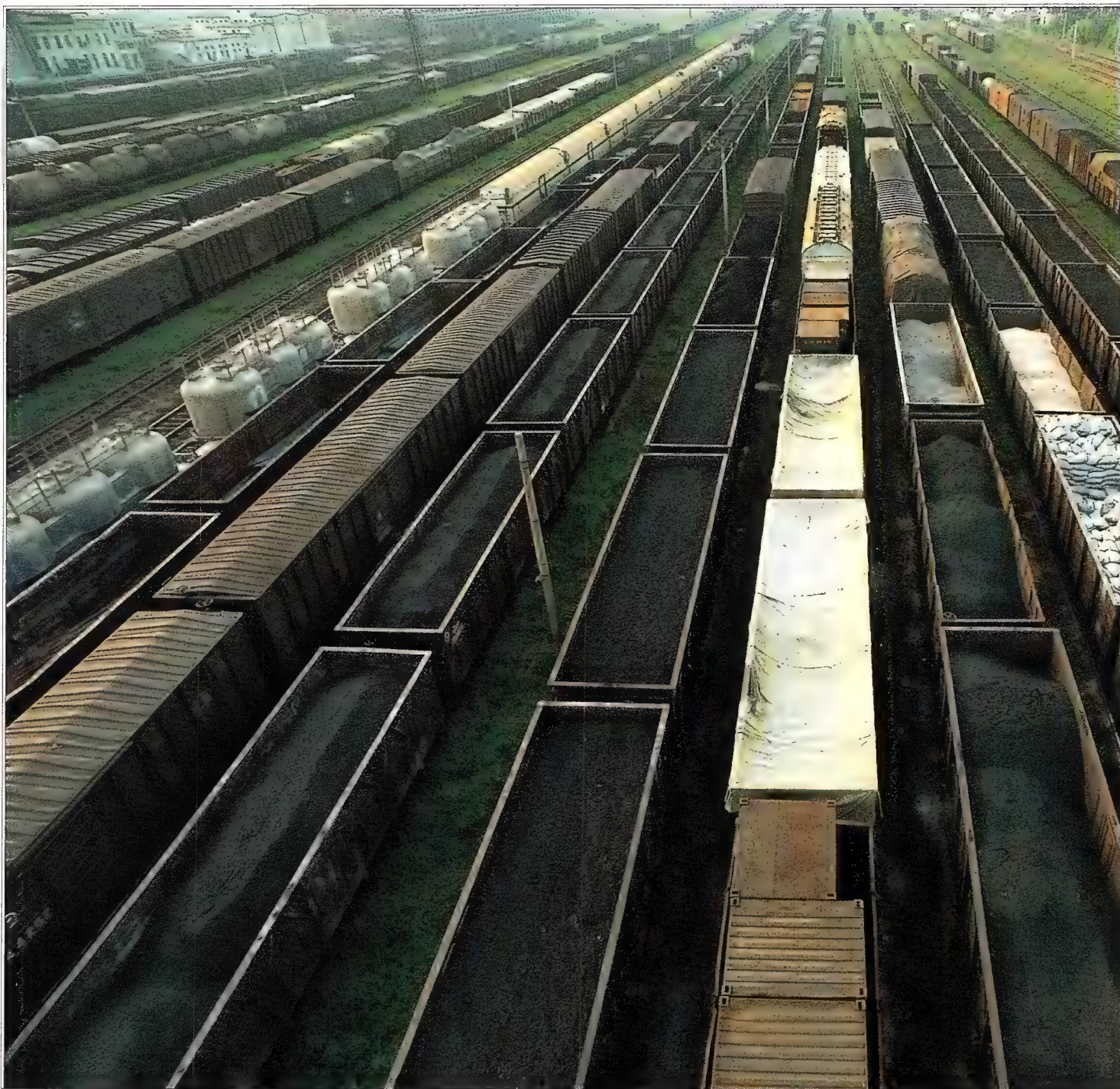
By the ancient Xiangguo Temple, a huge structure in the architectural style typical of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) houses a department store said to be the largest of its kind in the entire province and the fourth largest in the country.

Kaifeng as a town first took shape in the fifth century B.C., and served as the capital of the State of Wei during the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.), the Five Dynasties (907-960), and the Northern Song (960-1127). It reached its height of prosperity during the Northern Song period when it was the largest city in the country and the most important trade centre in the Far East. No wonder most of the structures built in traditional styles resemble those of the Song.





Long queues at Zhengzhou Station in Henan attest to the fact that this is one of the busiest stations on the route.



The North Train Station of Zhengzhou

Zhengzhou, provincial capital of Henan, is where the railways of Lianyungang-Lanzhou and Beijing-Guangzhou cross each other. It is linked with 23 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities by express trains, and serves 140,000 passengers daily, next only to Beijing among all Chinese stations in passenger handling capacity. The station is covered with an unusually large network of criss-

crossing rails on the ground and another network of cable lines above.

The station is also a centre of freight transportation. The North Train Station of Zhengzhou is China's largest marshalling yard and occupies an area of 5.3 square kilometres with 225 rail lines in the switchyard. From a high vantage point, one has an impressive view of the carriages fully laden with freight waiting to be forwarded to various parts of China.



Steam engines still have many miles left in them, even though they are gradually being replaced by electrified trains. Here workers are seen checking and carrying out repairs.

green fields which stretched as far as the eye could see. At 6:40 in the afternoon, the train, having crossed northern Jiangsu, pulled in at Xuzhou, a city on the northwestern border of the province. A large station, Xuzhou is where the east-west Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway meets with the north-south Beijing-Shanghai Railway. Trains pull in and out all day long, heading for all corners of China.

In this area, there are many archaeological treasures to be found. In the northern suburbs are some Han-period graves with wonderful stone figure paintings. The most interesting find is a 3,000 strong terracotta army in miniature located in a Han-period grave.

In Henan

Darkness was beginning to fall when the train left Xuzhou. We soon crossed the northern tip of Anhui Province and entered Henan Province. Leaving Shangqiu, my watch showed something past 9:00, which meant we were still three hours away from Zhengzhou, capital of Henan. It was midnight when the train finally chugged into Zhengzhou.

At the Waiting Room of Zhengzhou Station

Zhengzhou is one of the oldest cities in China. Shang Dynasty (c. 16th-11th century B.C.) artifacts prove that the city had been an important cultural city and in fact was a bronze making centre. The city wall from the

Shang period has been unearthed, measuring 7.2 kilometres.

Jumping off the train, I was hit by the chilly night air. Though it was midnight, there was no lack of passengers getting on or off the train. One reason was because Zhengzhou is at a point where the Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway and another major north-south line, the Beijing-Guangzhou Railway, cross each other. A transportation hub, Zhengzhou is reached by express trains from 23 of China's 31 provinces, autonomous regions and centrally administered municipalities. Every day, 140,000 passengers make use of the station. The lobby at the station was exceptionally spacious, very appropriate given the number of passengers.

I bought a ticket for the No. 41 Express and found myself a seat in the waiting room, which despite the hour remained a lively and bustling place. People walked around, chatted, played cards, read, smoked or just dozed. At 4:13 when it was still dark, the No. 41 train from Beijing arrived.

From the train, I watched the day break and the sun gradually rise. Suddenly I noticed that the train was travelling beside a river of rather muddy water. In fact, from Lankao onward, our train had been running parallel with the Yellow River. Apart from the river, the scenery along the way was not much different from that in Jiangsu, still vast stretches of farmland and ponds.

Early in the morning, we pulled in for an



eight-minute stop at Luoyang. The huge number of travellers made the toilet and hot water on the train starkly inadequate. Many passengers now pushed their way onto the platform to stretch their legs, visit toilets, brush teeth and wash faces. As the stop was short, they did all this as if they were fighting a battle. From one of the many peddlers with carts loaded with supplies, I bought a roast chicken and a bottle of orange juice. Before I could finish eating, the train started to move again.



After a long night aboard the crowded train, many of the passengers take the opportunity to stretch their legs in the early morning at Luoyang Station.



The rail line at Luoyang East Station runs under a spider web network of wires.



At round 9:00, the train entered the West Station at the city of Sanmenxia. The Yellow River flows down along the border between Shaanxi and Shanxi Provinces before it turns east to cross the northern part of Henan Province. Once in Henan, the first city that the turbulent river roars through is Sanmenxia. Here, the terrain displays an unmistakable change. The colour of green that had accompanied us all the way up to now faded away. Instead, large patches of yellow earth greeted our eyes. Not long after, we left Henan and came to Tongguan in Shaanxi Province.



The train speeds across the wide loess plateau in central Shaanxi, heading for Lanzhou in Gansu.

In Shaanxi

A strategic pass in the southwest of the Qinchuan Plain in central Shaanxi, Tongguan has been an important strategic place since ancient times. In the heart of the Qinchuan Plain lies the city of Xi'an, known in history as Chang'an. It served as the capital of China for eleven dynasties. It is perhaps most celebrated as the site of Qin Shihuang's gravesite. If Tongguan was lost, Chang'an would be thrown into danger.

Northern Shaanxi is situated on the Yellow Loess while the southern part is endowed with flatland cut across by rivers. The Qinchuan

Plain has the most fertile land in the province and is the breadbasket of China.

The No. 41 Train came to a stop at Xi'an soon after noon. For many passengers this was the end of their journey but I was going to change to the No. 97 Special Express to Ürümqi, leaving early next morning.

The newly-completed Xi'an Railway Station is grandiose with sixteen waiting lounges catering for 7,000 passengers at any given time.

In Gansu

At 2:32, the No. 97 Special left Xi'an. When I woke up, it was daylight. Shaanxi was

now way behind and we were in Gansu Province. The first major city we passed through was Tianshui known best for the grottoes at Mount Maiji. First started in the 4th century, work on opening up more grottoes here continued up to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), resulting in a large number of works revealing different styles. These grottoes are most interesting for their clay figurines. The most beautiful ones are located in the caves dating from the Northern Wei (386-534) and Western Wei (535-557). Unfortunately, the grottoes cannot be seen from the train. What can be seen are gullies and cave dwellings on



Travelling through the Gansu Corridor towards Zhangye, the train passes fields with sheaves of golden straw, all that is left after the harvest.

In the Streets of Lanzhou

Lanzhou, capital of Gansu and the western end of the Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway, has a history of over 2,000 years. Both Han Dynasty General Huo Qubing on his expedition to the Western Regions and Tang Dynasty Monk Xuan Zang on his trip to India to study Buddhism passed through Lanzhou.

The second largest city in Northwest China, next only to Xi'an, Lanzhou's produce markets are a scene of prosperity. Every kind of produce as well as clothes can be found in these markets.

What strikes most visitors as unique is to see old country men tour the streets crying out for fur and leather products. This is indeed a northwestern custom: selling and buying winter clothing before winter arrives.



the Yellow Loess. The dry climate with very little rainfall and rather soft earth has proved convenient for building caves which, being warm in winter and cool in summer, are actually very comfortable to live in.

It was mid-afternoon when we entered the city of Lanzhou, the Gansu provincial capital which is located in the centre of China. It has a long history, once being an important station along the Silk Road. Being a transportation pivot in Northwest China, it is where the Lanzhou-Xinjiang and Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railways meet and where the Lanzhou-Qinghai and Baotou-Lanzhou lines begin.

Departing from Lanzhou, the train went through one tunnel after another. Near the rails were poplar trees whose leaves were already turning yellow while in the distance were sturdy but barren mountains. Land covered with sand and pebbles stretched from the rails as far as the naked eye could see.

Before the train went into Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County, it had to climb over the Wushao Mountain. The weather turned surprisingly cold and the train slowed down as it clunked up the slope.

As the train sped along the Gansu Corridor, a strip of land between the mountains in the north and south, the dry northwesterly wind kept blowing and my throat ached because of the dry air. It was deep into the night and the train stopped serving any food and water. It was only then I realized why so many passengers had brought fruits with them. In particular the Gansu watermelons which were juicy, sweet and very inexpensive seemed the most timely and effective cure against the dryness. I began to quench the fire in my throat with the watermelon I had bought in Lanzhou.

When I woke up next morning, we were coming into the city of Zhangye. In ancient times, Zhangye was a major town on the Gansu Corridor section of the Silk Road. In 111 B.C., General Huo Qubing won a decisive battle against northern nomads called the Xiongnu (Huns). To maintain the safe opening of the Silk Road, Emperor Wudi of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 24) immediately decided to establish prefectures at Zhangye and Dunhuang.

What we saw at Zhangye through the train windows was predominantly a large expanse of the Gobi Desert, a parched land covered with pebbles. It was so flat and open that one could look right into the horizon with nothing to obstruct the view. As we travelled further along, barren hills, crags and huge rocks



The train goes through tunnel after tunnel after it leaves Gansu on its westward journey.



came into sight as we entered the northern mountain region of Gansu near the southwest border of the Inner Mongolian Highland.

In the city of Jiuquan, "translucent wine cups" have been a special local product since ancient times. Carved out of jade from the Qilian Mountains, they are still produced in their traditional designs. I saw they were also being sold at the city's train station.

Jiuquan is also known for its association with General Huo Qubing. When he and his troops triumphed over the Xiongnu, he stationed his troops here. Emperor Wudi bestowed on him a jug of wine for his meritorious service. The general poured the wine into a spring there in order to have all the troops enjoy the present from the emperor. The name of the spring was changed into Wine Spring, or Jiuquan in Chinese, and the city took the same name.

Crossing the Ming Dynasty Great Wall

The rustling wind and the desolation along the way reminded me of Zhang Qian, an en-



Broken segments of the Great Wall can sometimes be seen in this area. After passing the Jiayu Pass fortress the train cuts through a section of the Ming Great Wall.



Knitting and reading help pass the time for many passengers on the crowded train (above and right).

oy sent out by Emperor Wudi to visit countries in what was then known as the Western Regions. He was captured the first time he went on his mission in 139 B.C. by the Xiongnu, who controlled the Gansu Corridor, and was held in house arrest for over a dozen years until he escaped and fled back to the Han Dynasty capital of Chang'an in 126 B.C. Seven years later in 119 B.C., he embarked on his mission the second time and successfully established relations between China and many central Asian Kingdoms.

In this desolate region, sections of the Great Wall frequently came into sight. The highlight was reached when we arrived at Jiayu Pass. A short while after the train pulled out of Jiayuguan City, we were attracted by a three-storey tower with a north-south earth wall. Despite its rather ordinary appearance, this tower is the very western end of the Great Wall. The wall was completed in 1372 during the Ming Dynasty.

In ancient times, the area beyond the Jiayu Pass was a no-man's land. One folk song has it: "With Jiayu Pass behind, one is in a barren land. The devil's gate is at the back and the Gobi Desert in front. It's easy to come out of the pass but the way to enter is hard to find." Today, this is no longer true. The further west the train pushed, the more passengers got on. There were so many of them that a large number of them had to be content with standing in the aisle. Some simply sat on their luggage and once they were settled that way, they began knitting or playing cards to kill the time.

From Jiayuguan westward, I found that the Gobi Desert stretched along the way without letup. We stopped for a few minutes at a small station called Qiaowan. All there was at the station was a solitary small house. In fact, stations like this were spread all the way along the railroad, tirelessly serving their duty of meeting and seeing off passengers day in and day out.

At Liuyuan, I felt the presence of the desert more than ever. I knew the Yangguan Pass was not far away. The ancient saying about Yangguan was that, "West of Yangguan, there would not be a single acquaintance." Today, however, people travel across Yangguan in increasing numbers and frequency. When the train swept past Hongliuhe, the last station in Gansu and into Xinjiang, it was already sunset.

In Xinjiang

At around 6:00 in the morning, the train arrived at Turpan Station in Xinjiang. The town of Turpan was still an hour's bus journey away from the station.

Between Turpan and Ürümqi, capital of

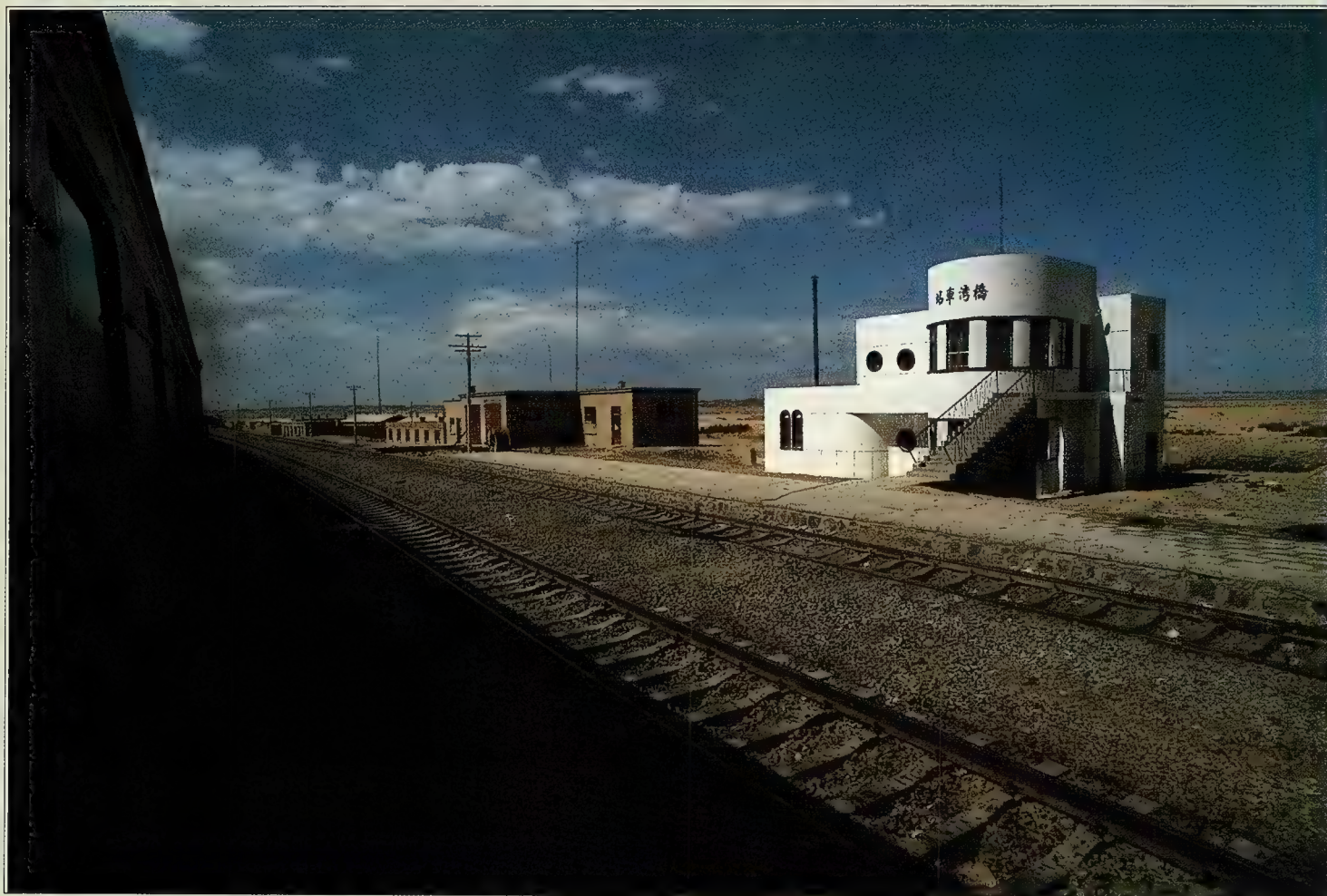


Xinjiang, the train travelled about 140 kilometres to the northwest through more than a dozen tunnels as the railway cut across the Tianshan Mountains, one of the three mountain chains in the region.

The scenery in Xinjiang was very different from that in Gansu. Outside the train, it was either fields or large patches of vegetable gardens. The long hours of sunshine and great difference in temperatures between the day and night are ideal conditions for crops and are especially helpful to fruits and vegetables. The Hami melon from Shanshan and seedless grapes and raisins from Turpan are particularly well known.

Desert, Gravel, Marshlands and Salt

Sitting in the train going westward from Ürümqi along the North Xinjiang Railway, we were approaching Alataw Mountain Pass, the end of the China section of the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway.



The Giaowan Station building, one of many such stations one encounters west of Liuyuan

The Grape Valley

Turpan is China's lowest basin and the second lowest in the world next to the Dead Sea. It is described as a "furnace" because it is one of the hottest places in China during summer. The seedless grapes produced here enjoy an ever ready market. The Grape Valley in the northeast corner of Turpan is the major grape producer in the region.

The valley is in the western section of the Flaming Mountain where the climate is dry and hot in summer. A river flows through the valley for over a dozen kilometres. Vineyards cover the area from the banks up to the slopes on both sides of the valley.

In the shade in the vineyards, residents leisurely chat, play and take naps. Though the heat in the Flaming Mountain is unbearable, cool gentle breezes grace the valley. No wonder the valley has become a tourist resort.



The North Xinjiang Railway is the western section of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway. When the Chinese and Soviet railroads link up with each other at Alataw, the railways of Lianyungang-Lanzhou and Lanzhou-Xinjiang as well as the Soviet railway have become one.

The Tianshan Mountains whose year-long snow-covered peaks glistened in the sunshine looked down on us as our train moved westward along the north of the mountains and south of the Junggar Basin. The Tianshan Mountains are China's largest glacial region where glaciers, like jade dragons, wind about in the frigid valleys.

After crossing the Jinghe River, green coverage thinned out conspicuously. Instead, desert, gravel, marshlands and salt plains along with a number of inland rivers that originate from the Tianshan Mountains such as the Changji, Manas, Kuytun, Bortala and Jinghe, often interlocking with each other, came to pass one after another. Most rivers in Xinjiang are inland ones whose source is the glacial snow waters from the high mountains.



Chrysanthemum Terraces Natural Pasture

Urümqi, capital of Xinjiang, is one of the cities farthest from the sea. In Mongolian, its name means "beautiful pastureland". Today, the city is no longer a pastureland but many pastures can still be found in the suburbs. The Chrysanthemum Terraces Scenic Area about sixty kilometres from the city is one such area.

On this pastureland, the word "terrace" in its name actually refers to a highland where flocks of sheep, and herds of oxen and horses grazing are a most common sight.

Many flowers blossom here but chrysanthemums dominate this natural flower garden. Rows of trees among terraces add much beauty and pleasure to the place.

Some of them dry up in the desert of the lowland. Some turn into saltwater lakes. The Tarim, the longest inland river in Xinjiang, flows through the Tarim Basin south of the Tianshan Mountains on a course of 2,137 kilometres.

When I eventually arrived at Alatau on the northwest border of Xinjiang, I looked around and found the mountain pass some twenty kilometres wide. The grotesque rocks appeared menacing. It is said that apart from the Huns and Wusuns who very often swept past here, the mountain pass saw virtually no other human souls in ancient times.

No longer a deserted place, today it opens the way to the Soviet Union and beyond.

Translated by Huang Youyi

The construction of the Chinese section of the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway line began in 1895 and was recently completed 95 years later in 1990. Three smaller sections go to make up the whole line: Gansu's Lanzhou-Lianyungang Railway, the Lanzhou-Xinjiang (Urümqi) Railway and the Northern Region (Urümqi-Alatau Mountain Pass) Railway, crossing the eastern, central and western parts of China. After entering the Soviet Union, the railway splits into three separate lines which, however, all have Rotterdam in the Netherlands as their destination.

The starting point of the railway, the city of Lianyungang is an ice-free and busy port city. Direct flights connect it with Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai.



Check point at the Alatau Mountain Pass on the Sino-Soviet border



Mount Fanjing Unveiled on Film

PHOTOS BY TCHAN FOU-LI
ARTICLE BY CHEN BO

Mount Fanjing in northeastern Guizhou Province has been a famous Buddhist shrine* since the late Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). It boasts many ancient temples and inscriptions on tablets. Yet paradoxically it has seen little change over the centuries; thus, much of its wildlife has been preserved in pristine condition.

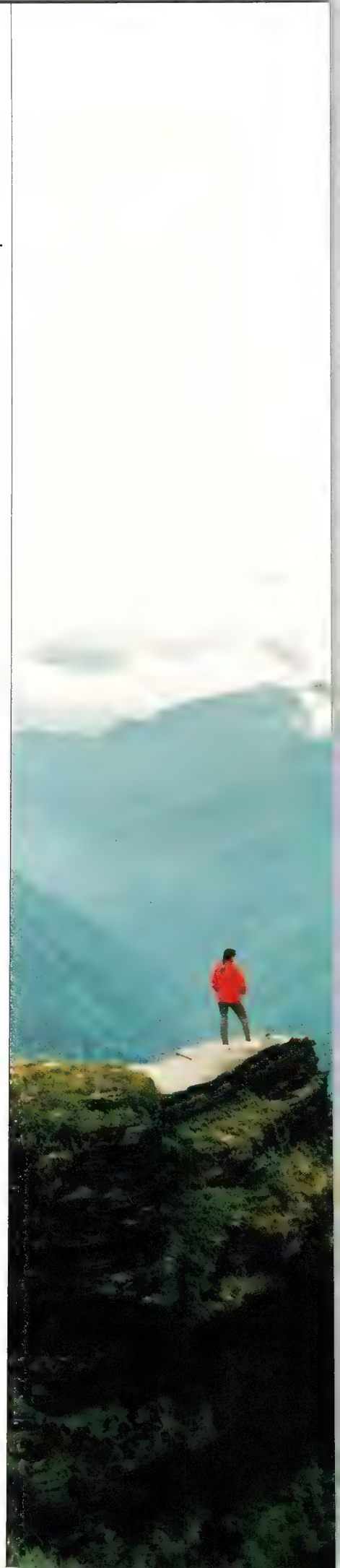
Here, the climate is mild and rainfall adequate all the year round. That is why ecological balance is good in its primitive forests. Here, rare animals and plants including about five hundred medicinal herbs flourish and this qualifies it as a nature reserve.

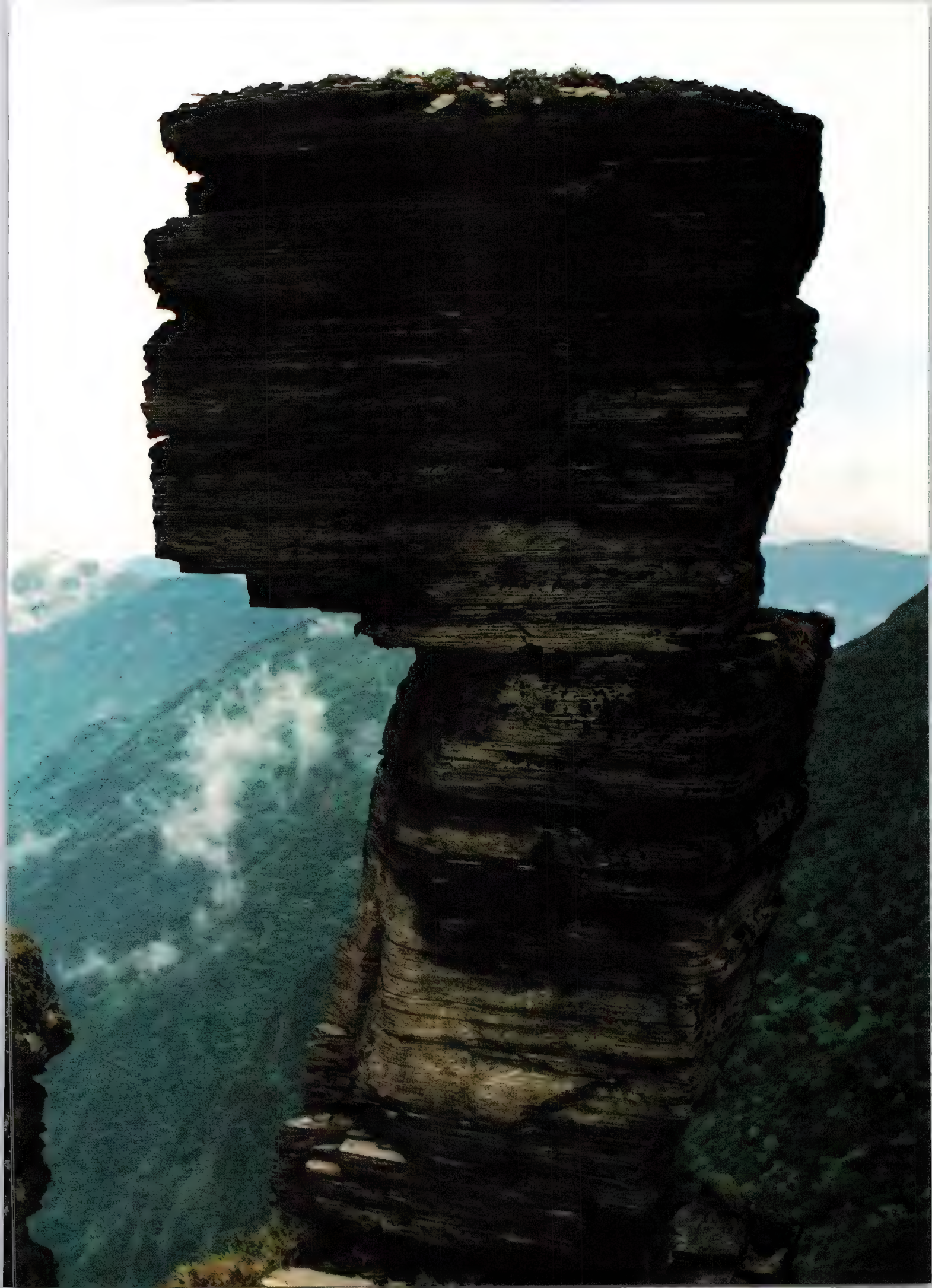
Towering 2,494 metres above sea level, Mount Fanjing is one of the main peaks of the Wuling Range which stretches from western Hunan Province to the eastern edge of the Guizhou Plateau. Blessed with ancient strata and an excellent ecological environment, it offers exquisite scenery. The mountain is a fine spot for tourists to visit in northeastern Guizhou and a nice place for photographers to capture unique views of nature on film.



A bamboo litter, used as a means of transportation on Mount Fanjing is the easiest way to scale the mountain.

Seemingly precariously perched, this rock pillar, known as the "Mushroom Rock", has been standing firm for thousands of years.







Using this method to make dried beancurd is also a kind of "invention".



Fishing is a major occupation of many families along the Jinjiang River.

Ten years ago when I was in Guizhou, I had heard about this sacred Buddhist mountain, but at that time, it was no easy task to climb it as it was covered with vast forests and frequented by poisonous snakes and ferocious large wild animals. Fortunately, such large animals tend to live deep in the wilds and seldom show up in areas frequented by people.

My dream of visiting Fanjing came true in May last year when Mr. Tchan Fou-li, a noted Hong Kong photographer, and I made a picture-taking excursion to the mountain.

Idyllic Scenery Along Tongren's Waters

Covered with largely untouched forests with trees more than a century old Mount Fanjing is shrouded in cloud and mist the whole year. It is said that there are 99 brooks on the mountain. Those on the southern slope converge into a river and those on the eastern slope into a stream. They join at the town of Tongren to become the Jinjiang River which flows eastward into the Yuanjiang River in Hunan Province and finally empties into Lake Dongting, China's largest freshwater lake.

We took a train and alighted at Yuping Station, known as the Home of the Bamboo Flute. A bus there took us to Tongren. We initially just wanted to stop over at the town to change busses. However, its beautiful landscape made us reluctant to leave. On its broad river were fishermen angling on their boats. This scene reminded us of similar views at towns and villages by the rivers in southeastern China.

After travelling 130 kilometres by bus from Tongren, we arrived at the county seat of Jiangkou. Mount Fanjing is located at the juncture of three counties – Jiangkou, Yinjiang and Songtao. We had to pass through Jiangkou in order to get to the mountain. Once there, we took a car and in about half an hour, we reached the banks of a small river called Heiwan. We could then climb up the mountain along the river.

Our hosts at the locality received us warmly. Knowing that we were rather advanced in age, they



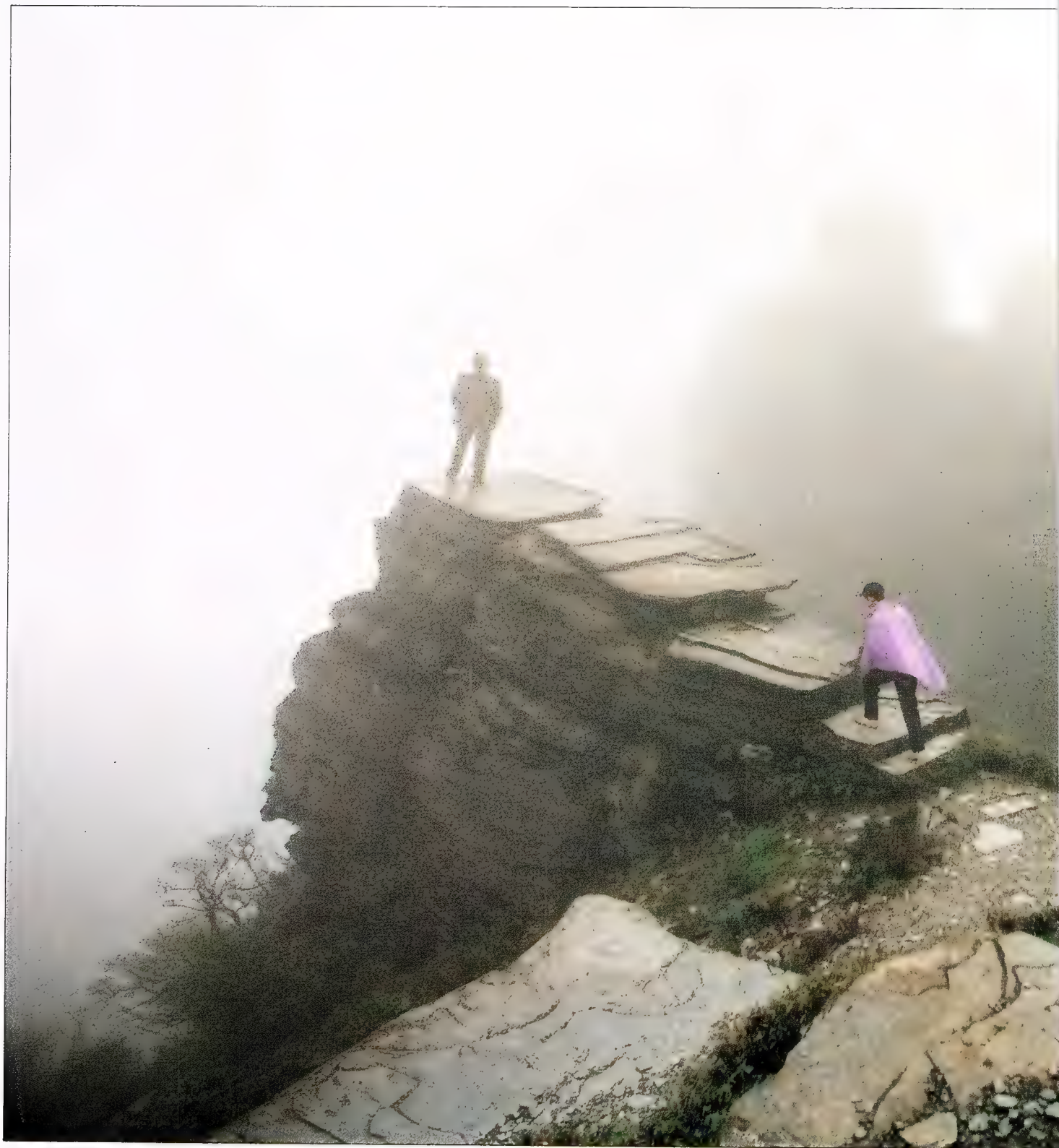
Fishermen in places like Guizhou Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region train cormorants to catch fish.



Found only in China, the dove tree originated in the Tertiary Period with one of its greatest concentrations being on Mount Fanjing.



A boatful of Tujia children on their way across a river. A large number of national minority peoples, especially the Tujia, populate this northeastern corner of Guizhou as well as areas of Hunan to its east and Sichuan to its north.



The mountain in a mysterious mood, with its bizarre rock formations shrouded by a heavy mantle of mist.

had thoughtfully fashioned a litter to take us up. We climbed about seven kilometres through rugged mountain paths before we reached Xiaoheiwán, the starting point of a stair path leading to the summit. Outside the valley, the weather was fine, but inside, it was rainy.

Heiwan River is actually a brook. It was turbulent because of rain and its spray leapt skyward. It is full of oddly-shaped rocks, some as big as a house. They lie at random within the water.

In the drizzle, we suddenly caught sight of what looked like flocks of white doves spreading their wings on the trees in a grove by the path. A second look made us realize that what we were looking at were not doves but a species of rare tree called the dove tree (*Davidia involucrata*). These trees are said to be growing only in China and can be found in western Hubei, Sichuan, northern Yunnan and Guizhou. Mount Fanjing happens to be the largest reserve for these rare trees which can grow to a height of over twenty metres.

Scaling a Ladder with Countless Rungs

We began to ascend the so-called Ladder with Countless Rungs. Actually, it is a stair path with 7,000 steps built along ridges curving like the back of a fish. A distance of 7.5 kilometres lies between Xiaoheiwán, starting point of the stair path, and Wanbao (Ten Thousand Treasure) Rock. No sooner had we started to climb then heavy rain started. It was most difficult even for one not burdened with anything to walk up in such a downpour, not to say the litter bearers. They had to keep going as there was no place on the way to shelter us from the rain. After walking some steps, they stopped to take a breather and then started going again. Such stopping and starting was repeated many times. Each time, we hoped to find a flat land ahead for a respite, but each time we were disappointed. Small wonder that people dubbed the path "a place with 24 unfulfilled hopes".

We passed through a virgin forest ranging 2.5 kilometres from one end to the other. As the mountain is in the subtropical zone, more than 80 per cent of it is covered with forests. Water from its

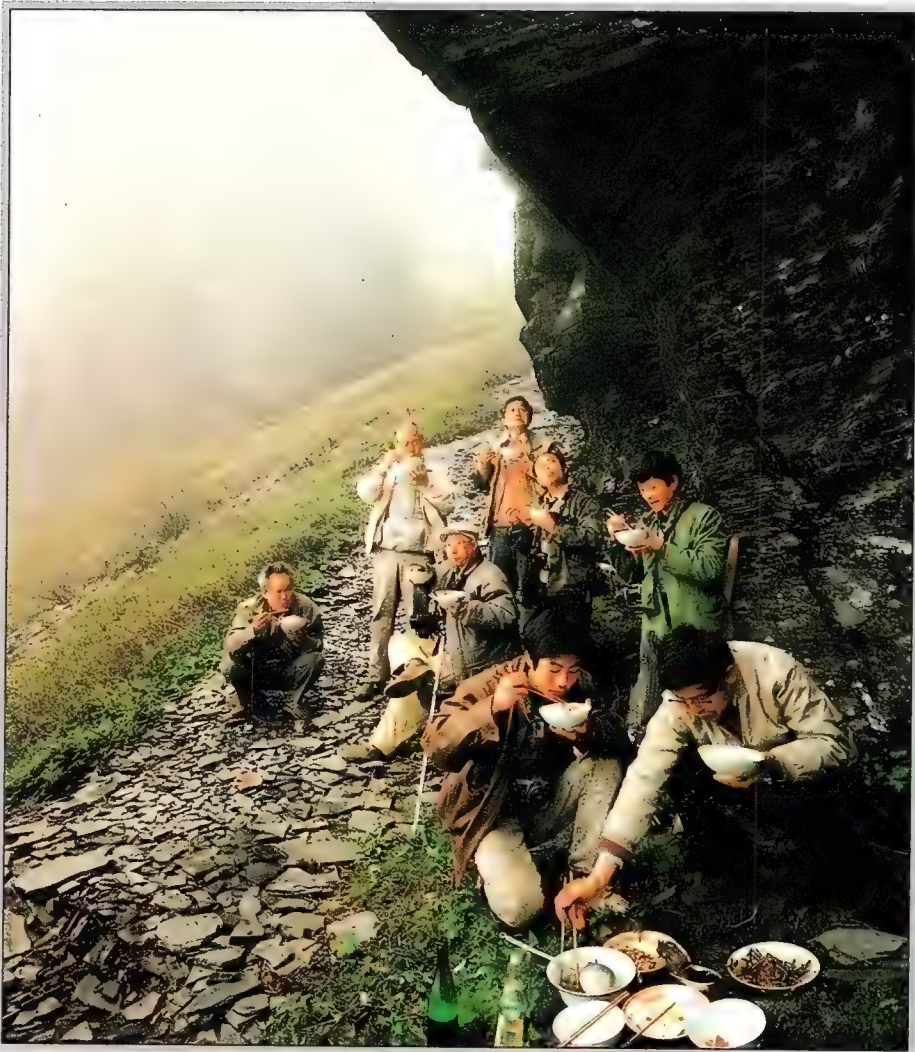
ever-flowing brooks is said to be the best mineral water. Because of rains and mists, scenes in the forest are hazy with an aura of mystery. The air is full of the delicate fragrance of ancient trees and the faint scent of wild flowers. This gives one's senses a taste of the unique tranquility of Mount Fanjing.

The rain had stopped by the time we reached the Wanbao Rock beneath the Golden Peak. A heavy mist surrounded the place. Nothing was visible beyond five metres. Many tourists who had come with us went to look for accommodations, but we were reluctant to leave, because we wanted to look at the landscape of the mountain when the rain stopped and the mist disappeared. Soon, however, it began to drizzle again. Seeing that we were cold and hungry, our guide led us to a huge rock which could shelter us from the wind and rain. He took out the food he had brought along. There were rice, salted duck eggs, fish, and chicken cubes with hot pepper. We had not eaten in at least six hours and should have worked up a good appetite. We were distracted from eating, however, by the drizzle and the changing mist on all sides. We were afraid to miss any stirring views which might be gone in the twinkling of an eye; it would be our deep regret if we did so.

Naturally Sculpted Masterpieces

Later, we went to the office of the Nature Reserve for a rest. At around six p.m., the mist and clouds began to dissipate and the sky became brighter and brighter. After a while, the pinnacle of the Golden Peak emerged from the heavy mist and the temple on a huge rock became visible. Though the middle part of the peak was still shrouded in mist, we could at last glimpse the rolling hills nearby. For about 20 minutes, Mount Fanjing unfurled before our eyes the great variety of its magnificent scenery.

At the top of the mountain are two peaks, one old and one new. Less than one kilometre from each other, they form a unique view. Usually, when people mention the Golden Peak of Fanjing, they mean the new one. It is a giant rock, about 100 metres high. As it is shaped like a rice steamer, the



The huge rock provides shelter from a light drizzle as the photographers take a break for lunch.



A legend has it that a Ming Dynasty empress, who came to the mountain to become a Buddhist nun, abandoned her baby son, the crown prince, in the central part of the mountain. The child turned into a solitary stone peak, dubbed the Taizi (Crown Prince) Rock, seen here in the centre of the picture.




local Tujia people call it Fanzeng (Rice Steamer) Mountain instead of Yuejing (Moon-shaped Mirror) Mountain. The latter original name has been replaced gradually by the former after the Ming Dynasty.

On the old Golden Peak, unusually shaped stones have created views peculiar to the mountain. The girl who accompanied us ran to the peak by a shortcut and pointed out to us the symbol of Fanjing – the Mogu (Mushroom) Rock. About six metres tall it is so named because of its resemblance to a mushroom. Near it was a rock shaped like an eagle's beak. We learned that Fanjing has a stretch of land full of such peculiarly fashioned rocks.

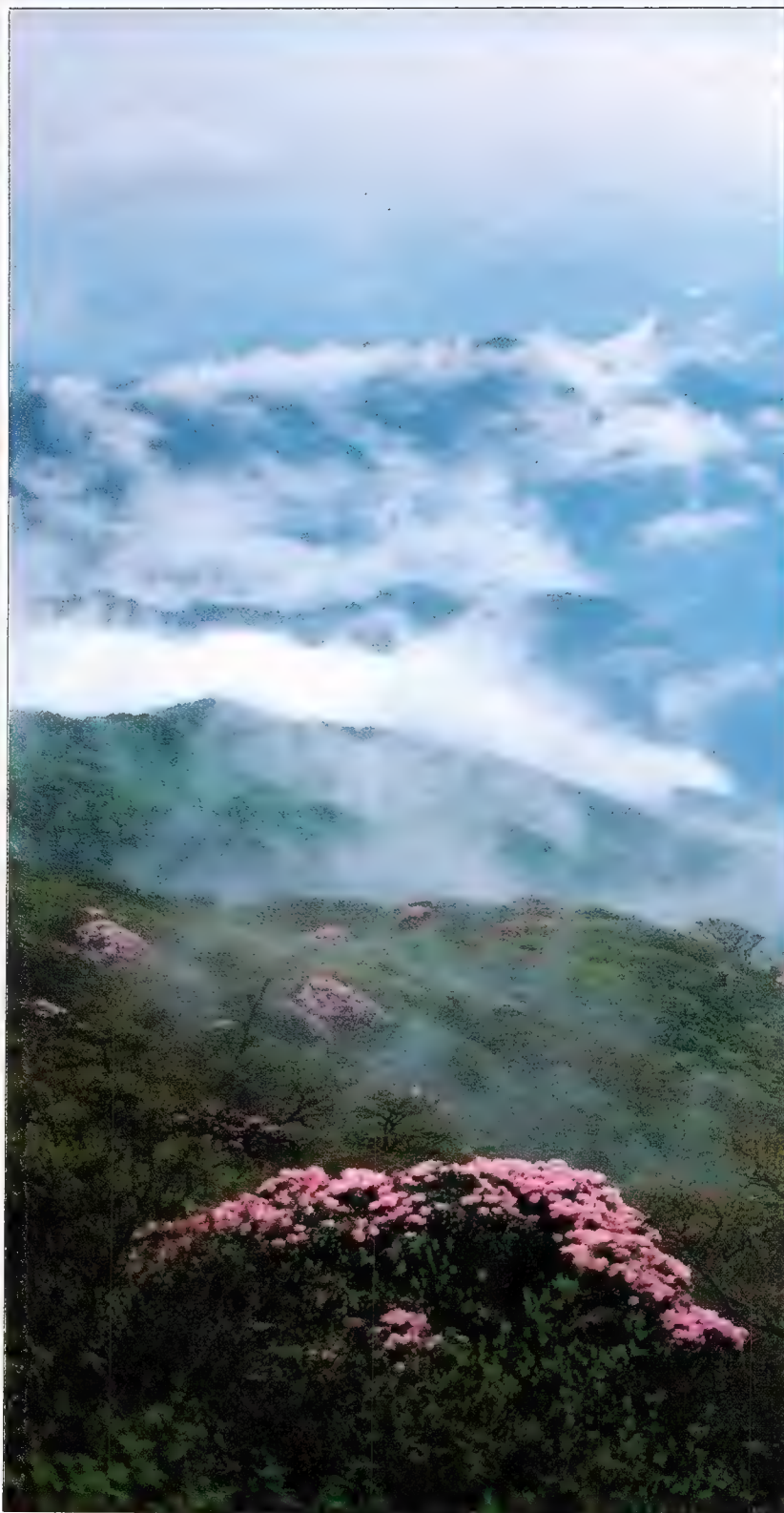
Not far from the mushroom rock is a large chunk of slate whose different layers, one lying on top of the other, are clearly marked. The layers look very much like a pile of books. That explains why people call it Wanjuanshu (innumerable copies of books).

The changing cloud and mist offered us endlessly changing views for our cameras. At the same time they also increased our difficulty in photographing. When the clouds became thick, the light was dim and we had to slow down the speed of the shutter. When the clouds had dispersed, the wind was so strong that we could hardly hold our cameras. It was necessary to keep composed in the face of such difficulties in order to take good shots.

Mount Fanjing shrouded in cloud and mist is really a mysteriously wonderful place. 

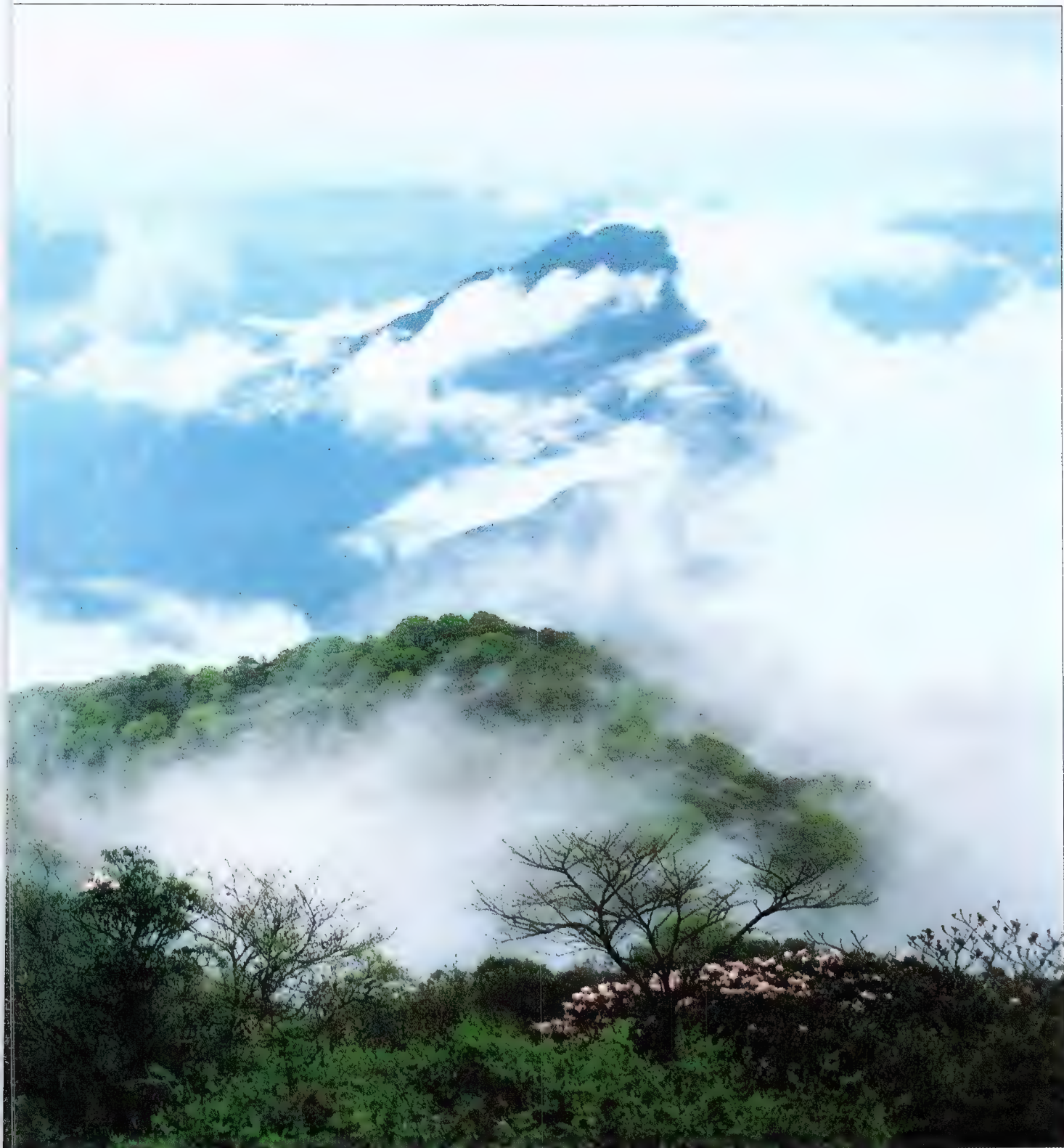
Translated by Anne Yan

*According to textual research, Mount Fanjing had once been a famous Buddhist shrine on the order of renown of Mount Wutai in Shanxi, Mount Emei in Sichuan, Mount Jiuhua in Anhui and Mount Putuo in Zhejiang. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, many temples and monasteries there were renovated or reconstructed. Standing on the few paths leading to the Golden Peak are 48 temples. However, they had been damaged because of the destruction wrought by wars. What remains for the most part are only their sites. In the past few years, funds have been earmarked for the renovation of the Sakyamuni Hall and Maitreya Hall on the peak of the mountain, reviving spectres of a legendary intra-Buddhist competition.



The mist finally disperses to reveal an enchanting landscape with an endless stretch of hills covered with fingers of fog in the distance.







Mongolians of Alxa in Western Inner Mongolia

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY HASBAGEN

Alxa League, surrounded by the Badain Jaran Desert, the Tengger Desert and the Ulan Buh Desert on three sides, lies in the western part of Inner Mongolia. It occupies a land area of 270,000 square kilometres, 60 per cent of which is desert and gobi. The landscape here is quite different from that of the east, which is the famous vast expanse of Inner Mongolian grassy steppes.

In this area the climate during different seasons varies greatly. In winter, it is dry and cold; while in summer, it is scorching hot. It is windy all year round. The wind in spring is particularly strong, but becomes rather mild by summer. In autumn and winter, the wind bites cold. Sometimes it snows in May. What is most impressive of the place, however, is not May snow but the periodic sandstorms. Great gusts of wind would churn up sand and earth appearing like moving walls if you look at them from some distance away. What is strange about this is that you might not feel even a stir of wind about you though you are only a few dozen metres away from the storm. But once the sandstorm reaches you, you would find, all of a sudden, that a gust of wind starts right at your foot. The hail of sand is so heavy that once in its midst you would

not be able to open your eyes.

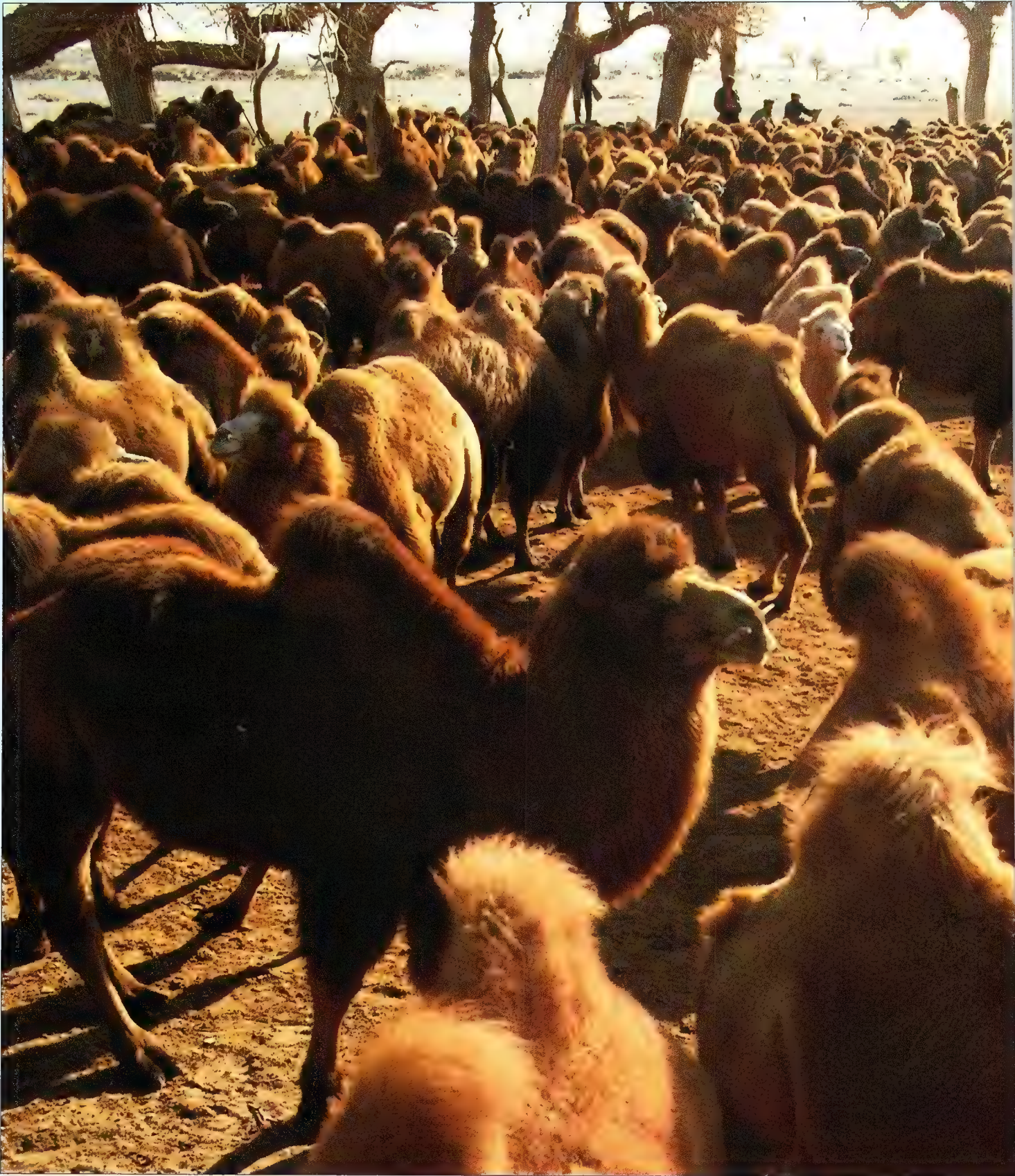
Alxa is the westernmost settlement of Mongolians in Inner Mongolia. Because of its location on the west of the Yellow River Bend, it is also known as "the Mongolia west of the Yellow River Bend", hence "West Mongolia". The customs of the Mongolians in this area, like the terrain, is quite different from that of the eastern part of Inner Mongolia. In order to learn more about their customs, last year I visited Ejin Banner in Alxa League, Alxa Left Banner and Alxa Right Banner.



The Mongolians of the Alxa area like to carry on their waistband a few ornaments including a flintstone which can be put to use if necessary.

*Herdsmen riding home on their camels are dwarfed by
diversiform-leaved poplars whose leaves turn a rich gold in autumn.*





Early every October the herdsmen of Ejin round up all the camels which had been freely grazing, ready to be claimed by their individual owners





Ejin, an Oasis in the Desert

In October, I left Bayan Hot in Alxa Left Banner (local term for a county) and headed northwest. We passed the first night in a village named Uliji and continued our journey the following day. The further north we went, the less grass we could see. Both sides of the road we were travelling on were nothing but vast expanses of nearly barren, flat desert. There was not a single bird, let alone a human being to be seen for hours. It was past five o'clock when we got to Ejin Banner.

An oasis in the desert, Ejin is full of diversiform-leaved poplars and red willows. It was the willows' flowering season when I was there. Each willow tree was aflame with bright red colour. As we approached a yurt, a dozen men on camels and donkeys kicking up clouds of dust came into sight. I was told that those people were coming to the birthday party in honour of a three-year-old. In this part of the country, there would be no birthday party for a child until he or she is three years old. So on the child's third birthday, a lot of guests were invited. When they arrived, they entered the birthday boy's yurt and presented wine to the party host. Then the party started. The child held up a plate covered with a white piece of silk, known as a *hata*, came to each row of guests and asked each to cut a lock of his hair and put it on the plate. After this, the guests gave their presents such as money, cloth, or even several sheep or camels to the child's parents.

After the ceremony, the guests filed out of the yurt and proceeded to another yurt which served as a sort of sitting room. Once inside, they sat down in the order of ranks of generations. The host offered them tea and wine. Then they began to sing local songs. The songs of western Inner Mongolia were also different from those of eastern Inner Mongolia. The melodies sung by eastern Mongolians were usually rather brief while those of the westerners were longer. The melodies sounded booming and featured a broad range of notes.

Recognizing One's Own Camels

In fact, many invited guests failed to show up because they were on the way to a place called Saihan Toroi to herd their camels.

Alxa in fact is known as Home of Camels. Early summer every year, herdsman would shave their camels and graze them in the open country for a few months. Then they all went to a designated place. Herdsmen not only looked after their own camels but also





helped one another herd camels and subsequently drive them in the same direction. The intended place for all camels to gather was Saihan Toroi. On October 19, I arrived at this small village. The early human arrivals had their tents set up, and waited for others. Several hundred camels were kept within an area sealed off by railings made of poplar. They were very quiet as if they somehow had anticipated that they would soon be leaving for home.

In the afternoon, the stragglers at last arrived. All of the camels were herded into the same place. Then as an order sounded, the herdsmen all rushed into the herd to find their own camels. The obvious question is how could they find their own animals among such a large crowd?

In fact those herdsmen recognized their own camels by way of examining the hoof prints on the ground. But to be sure, they



Sheep are not only the herdsmen's livelihood but also the pets of the children.



▲ A large herd of camels plod across the wide expanse of pastureland in the dusk (by Wong Chung Fai).

▼ Nearly the entire herd of Ejin camels totalling several hundreds are corralled to await the arrival of their owners.



had also branded distinctive marks on the flank of their camels. This practice prevented unnecessary dispute over the identification of camels by their masters.

A Side Trip to a Wedding

Two days later after I returned to Ejin I was invited to attend a local wedding. When I came to the house where the wedding was going to take place, there were already many guests who had come to the event riding their best camels. Mongolian weddings usually took place at noon.

When the time arrived the master of ceremonies first folded up the felt door curtain three times and placed it over the yurt roof. Then he put a plate of juicy chuck meat on it. After that he spread a carpet on the ground before the entrance. The guests stood on both sides of the carpet awaiting the arrival of the bride. When all was readied an excellent horseman galloped away to where the bride

lived. When he arrived, he lifted up the bride, who, beautifully dressed, was standing at the entrance to her yurt, and mounted her on the horse. When the horse carrying the bride approached, the bridegroom mounted his horse at once and hurried towards the bride while crackling firecrackers greeted her.

Now the bride and bridegroom rode together on the same horse. As they got to the yurt, the master of ceremony offered them a splinter of camels' thigh bone. Each holding one end of the bone, the bridegroom and bride stood on the carpet, and the formal wedding ceremony commenced.

The ceremonial etiquettes in western Inner Mongolia were more elaborate than those of the east. The wedding ceremony was no exception to the rule. After the ceremony itself there began a series of competitions such as "Striking at Hot Sickles", "Fetching Wine on Horseback" and other non-Olympic events. Such athletic activities do not usually take

place in weddings back east. After the games, a wonderful banquet was served.

Heicheng: Ancient Capital of the Western Xia

Ejin, known as Juyanhai in days of yore, was a pass that all nomads and travellers had to go through when they went into the Central Plains; thus, it was a place of considerable strategic importance. During the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), this area was the battleground where the Han and Xiongnu (Hun) troops were locked in desperate combat. The Xiongnu were nomadic cattlemen who led a great confederation of nomadic tribes in the steppe and desert. This empire stretched from Baikal to Balkhash and southward to the neighbourhood of the fortieth parallel. In fact, the Great Wall was originally constructed to protect China from the Xiongnu. Through most of the second century B.C., Han Dynasty emperors presented substantial gifts to the Xiongnu. The Xiongnu were not subdued until well into the reign of Emperor Wudi (reign dates 140-87 B.C.) only after three offensives.

Today it was nothing but seemingly endless desert. The Han Dynasty's military fortifications were all buried beneath the sand. However, Heicheng (Black Town), 20 kilometres to the southeast of Dalain Hob in Ejin, still existed. It was said that Marco Polo had once passed through here.

Having enjoyed the wedding festivities, I set off for Heicheng the next day. When I got there I discovered that Heicheng was mostly covered in sand. Only some dilapidated battlements could still be found. I climbed up the sand dune and went up to the battlements. I looked at the battlements closely and, to my delight, found two wooden dice.

According to historical records, Heicheng was once the capital of the Western Xia Regime established by the Dangxiang nationality (Tangut) herdsmen of the Ordos area in 1032. Legend has it that once the town was garrisoned by a Western Xia general and his troops were besieged by enemy Mongolian troops. But for a long time enemy troops were unable to break in. So they cut the resources of water for the town. Due to the shortage of water, the town was in great danger. The general ordered the whole town to put all their gold, silver and other valuables into a dried well. He himself was finally killed in battle, and the town fell into the hands of the enemy. The vicious soldiers slaughtered





Said to have been visited by Marco Polo, the ancient city of Heicheng (Black Town), built in the Western Xia period around the tenth century, is now largely buried in sand.

all the residents, turning the town virtually into ruins. The Western Xia, borrowing the name of the old historical Xia Dynasty, were shortly thereafter destroyed by the troops of Genghis Khan in 1227, in spite of an alliance with the Mongols against the Jin empire concluded in 1225.

Alxa Right Banner: Camels in Heat and a Slaughtered Sheep

Having travelled for two days by car, we arrived at the Alxa Right Banner. Compared to Ejin, here grass was more abundant and succulent, not surprisingly there were also more inhabitants.

The place I now visited was called Haisen-chulu, another oasis in the desert. The people here practically lived on camels. It happened to be the season when camels were in heat.

We saw two male camels fighting against



each other in order to win a female. They were fighting so furiously that even the herdsmen failed to separate the combatants.

Communication in this part of the country was rather poor. Herdsmen lived scattered, and there were few visitors from outside.

Local snuff bottles made from the root of the diversiform-leaved poplar are believed to have long history.



When I arrived, they immediately slaughtered a sheep and offered some dumplings to entertain me. An elderly lady played a horse-headed fiddle, as they put it, to whet my appetite. After the meal, the host began leisurely taking snuff. As far as I knew, the Mongolians in eastern Inner Mongolia did not have such a custom. I asked to have a look at his snuff bottle. It was made of poplar root.

Apart from the custom of snuff-taking, the local people were habitually carrying a flint at their waists. Those flints were handed down from generation to generation.

After the Spring Festival, I left Alxa Left Banner for Menggen Village in Alxa Right Banner to attend the household Nadam Fair on the fifth day of the first lunar month. I had heard that more than a hundred people would take part in this festival.

Our car raced towards Menggen Village. From time to time on the way, I saw local people in their traditional costume, riding camels in the same direction. They, too, were on their way to the festival.

At the celebration arena, I saw early arrivals presenting *hata* to the host to show their New Year greetings. Then each fished out his snuff bottle. The host and guests exchanged those small bottles, fondled them and then returned them to their owners. After the ceremony, they all entered yurts to have a meal of dumplings. The Nadam Fair activities started formally in the afternoon.

The Household Nadam Fair

In Mongolian, "nadam" means amusement. In 1206, when Genghis Khan unified all the Mongolian tribes, the Nadam Fair was held for the first time for the purpose of celebrating battle victories as well as appointing new generals.

The first item on the agenda of this Nadam was a camel race. More than a hundred robust camels waited at the starting point, some 20 kilometres away. Once the signal was given, they sped forward. We waited about 40 minutes before they came in sight. In a minute, they dashed towards the finish line. Umpires in Mongolian robes took great care to keep the time. Once the first place winner was determined, they tied a red *hata* across the camel's head in honour of its achievement.

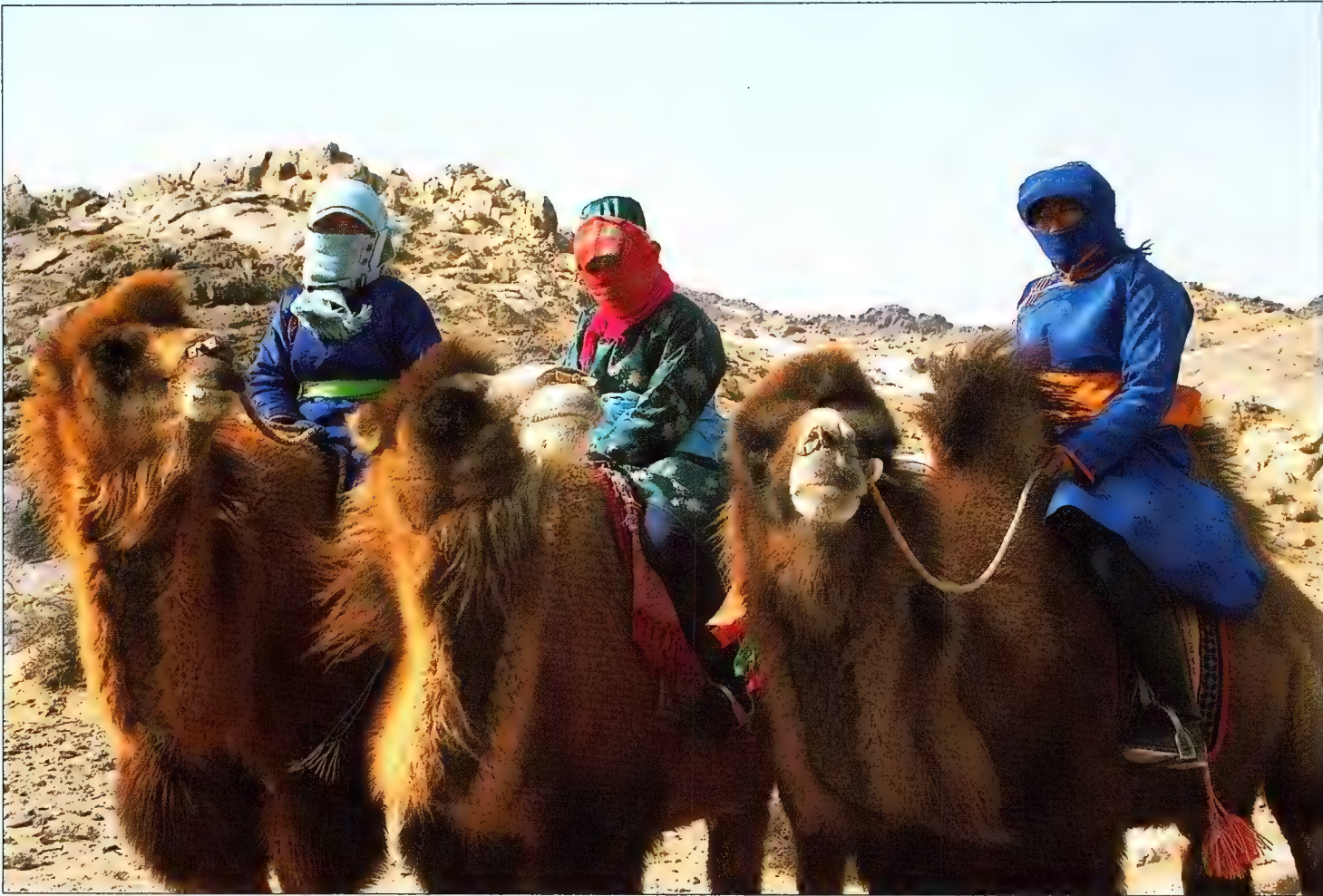
Wrestling matches were inevitable in a traditional Mongolian festival. This festival was



▲ During the mating season, male camels are aggressive towards other male competitors in the mating game.

◀ Mongolian children, traditionally dressed, prepare to attend a wedding. The young man sports a modern touch, however, in his choice of caps.





Participant coming to the household Nadam Fair bundle themselves up against the wind-swept sand.



Most Mongolian herdsmen in the Alxa Right Banner set up a small Buddhist shrine in their homes for daily worship.



no exception. The wrestlers' movement bore a rather strange resemblance to that of a camel. The guide told me that they truly adopted certain wrestling movements from the camel. Unfortunately I did not have another chance to witness a camel courtship battle to analyze similarities in style.

Temporary Lamas

The sixth Dalai Lama once fled to Alxa, and the ninth Panchen Lama had been to Alxa too. It obviously was a place greatly influenced by the Buddhist religion. Today, many temple fairs in Alxa League are celebrated. One of the best known was the fair held annually in the South Monastery in Alxa Left Banner to welcome the Living Buddha from the North Monastery.

The South Monastery was located at the foot of the Helan Mountains. In front of the monastery stood a white dagoba. It usually took nearby herdsmen four or five days to get there by riding horses. I was luckily in the same banner as the monastery and it took me a little over an hour to get to the South Monastery. We were fortunate to catch the ceremony to greet the Living Buddha. Lamas presented *hata* to him and then invited him to sit in the centre of the monastery. Herdsmen from all over the region sat together with lamas, watching some religious performances.

After the celebration, the lamas dispersed for home. I realized that they were actually "lamas for a day". They were in reality drivers, doctors, civil servants and people from all walks of life.

Translated by Wang Mingjie

Alxa, a league in the western part of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, has to its southwest Gansu Province, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region to its southeast and Mongolia to its north. With a population of about 150,000, Alxa League consists of three banners: Alxa Left Banner, Alxa Right Banner and Ejin.

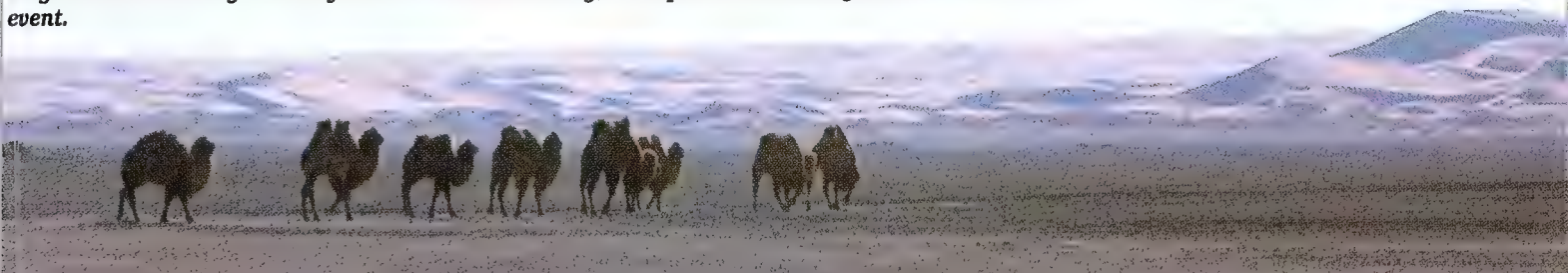
It has a desert climate, with the lowest temperature in winter dropping to around -25°C. Severe sandstorms frequently strike the region in the spring months. June and July are the rainfall months, but rain is scarce the whole year round, resulting in very dry conditions. The terrain there is mainly desert similar to the deserts of Badain Jaran, Ulan Buh and Tengger. As the land there is unsuitable for the growing of crops, the Mongolians of Alxa mainly raise livestock as a means of livelihood. Home to about one-sixth of the world's total of two-humped Bactrian camels, the place has earned the name "the land of camels".

The easiest way to visit Alxa is to take the bus from Yinchuan in Ningxia over the Helan Mountains to Bayan Hot in the Alxa Left Banner. The distance is about 150 kilometres. Bayan Hot is about 300 kilometres from Alxa Right Banner and 630 kilometres from Ejin. One can also travel from Zhangye or Jiuquan in Gansu Province to both the Alxa Right and Ejin Banners. The distance is only half that one must travel if one goes by way of Alxa Left Banner.

With a long and celebrated history behind them, Mongolian motif playing cards of the Alxa Left Banner are very popular in the western part of Inner Mongolia.



Lamas of the South Monastery in the Alxa Left Banner take part in a ceremony in which they receive the Living Buddha from the North Monastery, an important local religious event.





Northern Shaanxi's Loess Plateau:

More Than Meets the Eye

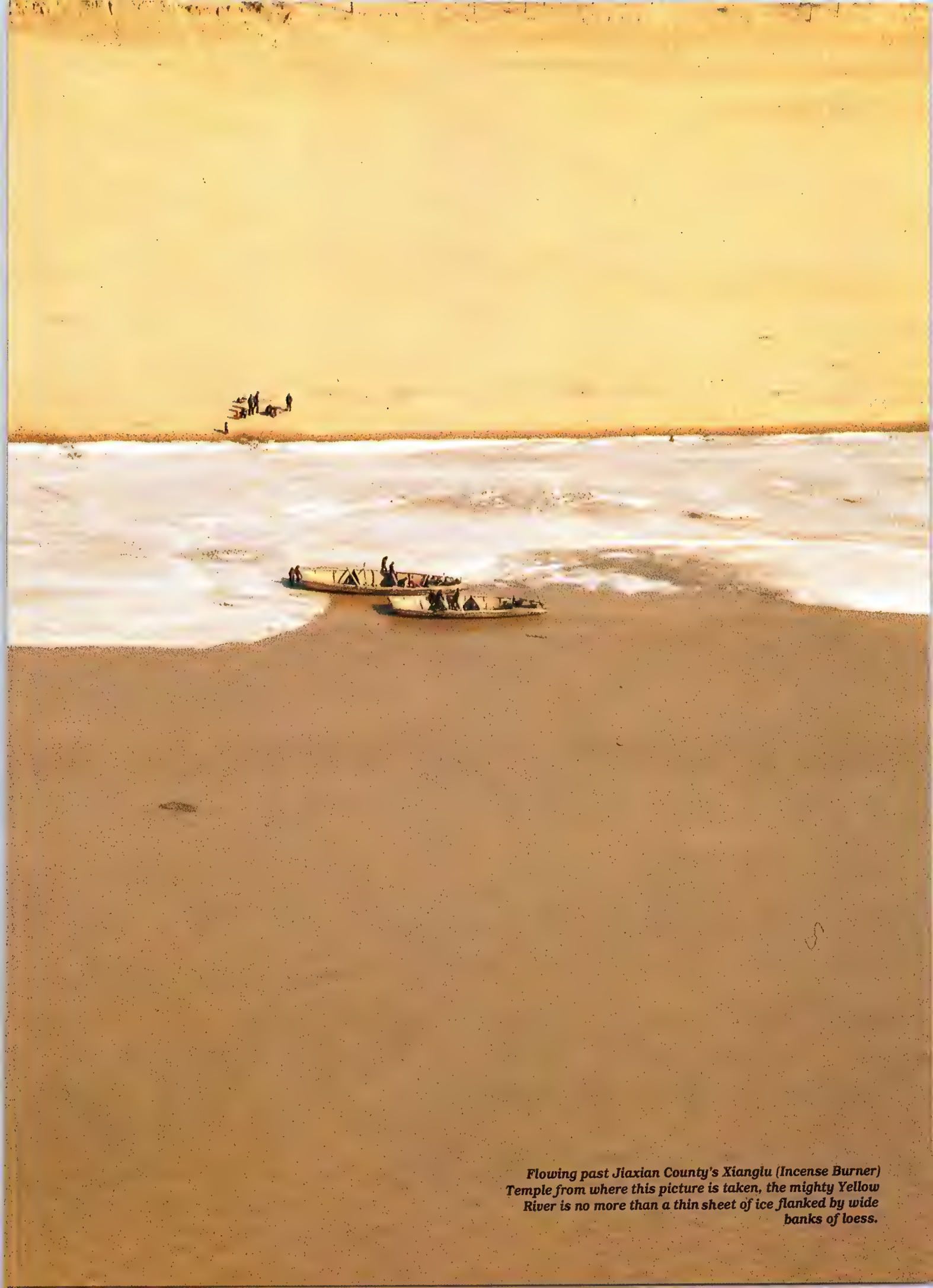
PHOTOS & ARTICLE
BY LI XIUMING

The Loess Plateau often calls to mind the image of vast stretches of deserted wasteland, but there is more to the area than meets the eye. This plateau was in fact midwife to the birth of Chinese civilization. This yellow earth, often shaped in starkly beautiful landscapes has given rise to many historical monuments and relics of great cultural value. The plateau of northern Shaanxi has been the setting of such legendary figures as Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor, Yu, one of the Sage Kings and Yandi, a tribal leader known as the Divine Ploughman. The irony is that much of the Loess Plateau's celebrated past remains hidden, as many of its historical relics are in grottoes. Looking at the panoramic, yet austere landscapes of the Loess Plateau one should remember that there is more than meets the eye.



Noodles are a major staple food of the people of northern Shaanxi. Here a local woman is so adept at stretching and tossing the dough that her movements are almost acrobatic.





Flowing past Jiaxian County's Xianglu (Incense Burner) Temple from where this picture is taken, the mighty Yellow River is no more than a thin sheet of ice flanked by wide banks of loess.



1



2



Located in the central part of the Loess Plateau of China much of Shaanxi is covered with a layer of yellowish soil 50-150 metres deep at an elevation from 800-1,800 metres above sea level. The soil has a special feature: It is as hard as rock when it is dry, but it collapses and is easily eroded away when it meets with water. The annual precipitation there is only a few hundred millimetres and the yearly rain is concentrated in July, August and September when thunderstorms can erode a great amount of soil and cut the lands into ridges and gullies – a landscape quite typical of the Loess Plateau.

My tour to the yellow loess land began from Tongchuan in central Shaanxi to Yan'an and Ansai where I enjoyed the performance of waist drums. Then I turned south back to Yichuan to visit the Hukou Waterfall to its east and then proceeded north to the two counties of Yulin and Jiaxian.

Tongchuan: A Communications Hub

As a hub of transportation in northern Shaanxi since ancient times Tongchuan is located in the central plain of Shaanxi. North of Tongchuan extends a vast expanse of loess land. Going by bus from here, one sees nothing but yellowish soil and rows of ridges carved by water—a scene of stark beauty; however, in vast terraced fields grow *kaoliang* sorghum, wheat and corn. Shaanxi is a province mainly engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, with hemp, tobacco and cotton as the chief agricultural produce and sheep as the main livestock. All agriculture is dependent on irrigation. The most interesting historical sites here are the grottoes of the Sui and Tang dynasties at Mount Yaowang.

Mount Yaowang in Yaoxian County, twenty-five kilometres away from Tongchuan and rising 800 metres above sea level, is famous for its grotto containing numerous statues. The more than forty statues inside the caves were mostly sculpted during the Sui (581-618) and Tang Dynasties. Most of the statues are of graceful and benevolent women with strong Chinese features, marking a wide divergence from the Buddhist art often found in caves.



3

At last we arrived in Yan'an backed by mountains and faced by a river. If one is at a high elevation, one may enjoy a wonderful sight of yellow hills rolling around the city and stretching into the distance. On the hillsides along the river valley are built rows of cave dwellings where we found evidence of human habitation.

There blew a soft breeze heralding the arrival of spring. The housewives were busy beautifying their cave dwellings, papering the walls with newspapers, putting up the New Year pictures and decorating the windows with paper-cuts.

A typical cave dwelling is simply dug out of a hill and often is arched. It can reach seven or eight metres deep and comfortably house a family. The insulating earth keeps the dwelling temperate in winter and cool in summer.

Waist Drum Dance Evokes Martial Glory

Spring had sprung! Longing for a rich year, the people there engaged in all manner of activities to pray for a mild climate and a bumper harvest. The big festival carried out in Ansai just north of Yan'an was, of course, the performance of the *yangko* dance and waist drum dance. There are dances also performed by the Han nationality. The *yangko* dance popular in northern China varies in style and feature in such different areas as northern Shaanxi, Northeast China, Hebei and Shandong. The dance in northern Shaanxi is characterized by choreography on a

- 1. Donkeys, able to perform all manner of tasks such as pulling a stone mill wheel, are very valuable to the people of this area.**
- 2. The Spring Festival always means various folk celebration activities in northern Shaanxi. One of the most striking events is the waist drum dance performed at Ansai. Here, dressed in white and awaiting their turn are some of the waist drum dancers mingling with members of another dance troupe.**
- 3. It is winter and even though some ice has already formed on parts of the Hukou Waterfall, the gushing yellow waters still splash down.**





large scale with the dancers arrayed in rank and file formation. In some places it is often accompanied by stilt dance, land-boat dance and lantern dance. With a drum fastened about the waist, the dancers in northern Shaanxi beat the drum while they dance. It has become a large-scale collective dance performed by men moving in formation during the performance with strong rhythm and clear-cut motion. In fact, the costumes of the participants resemble old military uniforms; and the dancers recreate movements in warfare.

The dancers in plain costumes wore yellow or red turbans, which appeared as numerous flowers when seen from a distance. The roaring of thousands of drums built up to a climax so deafening that it nearly took away one's breath. Beating the drums, the dancers danced a robust dance kicking up rolls and rolls of dust.

The Hukou Waterfall

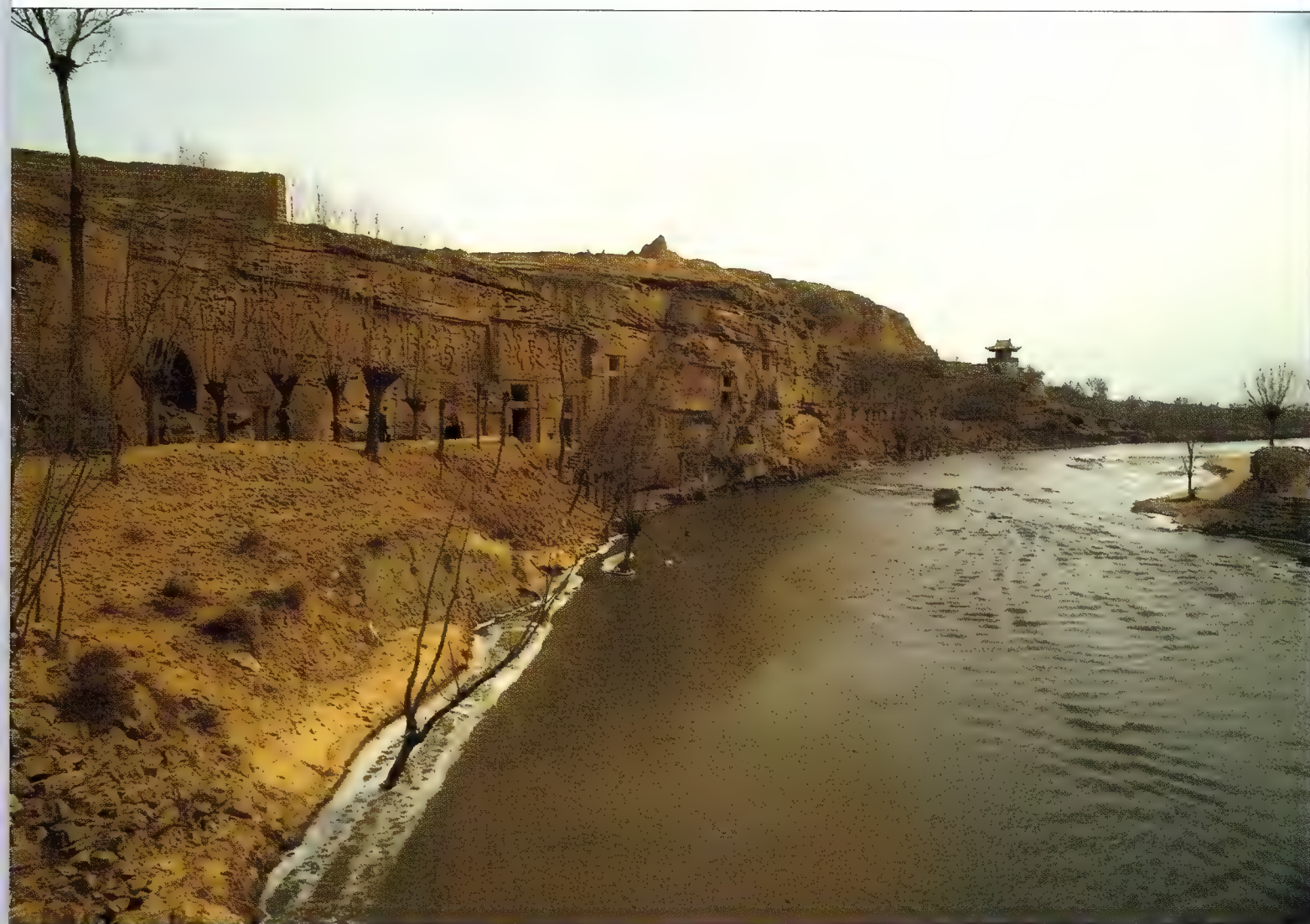
The rolling waters of the Yellow River flow south along the east edge of Shaanxi Province, carrying with it the sands stolen from the Loess Plateau and running heavily and turbulently towards the Hukou (Teapot Spout) Waterfall, sounding like thousands of horses galloping in the desert. The river narrows into the shape of a teapot spout and hence the name of the Hukou Waterfall. In order to see the largest waterfall on the Yellow River, after we had left Ansai, we went by bus to Yichuan County and then to the Hukou Waterfall.

Even when the bus was miles away from the waterfall, we heard the deafening roars of thundering waters. When we got nearer, we saw the Yellow River pour down as if it were spewing out of a teapot, spraying out yellowish muddy water. Constantly washing the river banks, the water has turned the rocks a burnt yellow. The mountains surrounding the area are brownish-yellow, the water is yellow. Everything here is tinged with yellowish tones. Now it certainly would not be considered beautiful, but it did possess a natural grandeur. During the rainy season (between July and September) it presents a more majestic view, thanks to the awe-inspiring rush of waters.

Yulin: Hidden and Neglected History

Travelling north from the Hukou Waterfall we came to the area of Yulin County, which borders on Inner Mongolia's Mu Us Desert. A section of the Great Wall built in the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) and renovated in Ming (1368-1644) times runs for a hundred kilometres through the desert to the north of the county seat. Due to erosion and neglect over the centuries, the wall is dilapidated and, in many places, a complete ruin. Ten metres to the north of the town stands the Zhenbei Beacon Tower. Built entirely of brick, it is 29.7 metres high and eighty metres wide at its base. Once an important watchtower, it dominates the central part of this section of the wall.


Another scenic spot just five kilometres to the north of Yulin on Hongshiyan is called Hongyan (Red Rock) Gorge. Some forty caves, niches



2

and Buddhist temples containing over one hundred inscriptions made by scholars of the past have been carved out of these cliffs since the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Six kilometres to the southeast of Yulin we find Mount Qingyun (Green Cloud) where over ten temples have been built since Ming times.

Red Rock Gorge is 1.8 kilometres long, hemmed in by high and steep cliffs on both sides. The Yulin River flows through the gorge flanked by bare weeping willows. When a blast of wind blows over, a cloud of yellow dust rolls up, revealing the rocks on the ground. The Yulin River makes a curve and then flows ahead, adding some beauty to the gorge. More than ninety kilometres southeast of Yulin lies the town of Jiaxian surrounded by a ravine. Like a sharp sword, the Yellow River has carved the Loess Plateau into a valley which forms the natural borderline between Shaanxi Province and Shanxi Province.

Xianglu (Incense Burner) Temple north of the county seat stands on a natural stone bridge by the edge of the ravine. From here one could see undulating rolls of the Loess Plateau in Shanxi Province beyond the river and the yellow waters on the Yellow River below, which flows unhurriedly ahead, bringing with it a large amount of yellow soil. As the soil has been deposited into the river bed and the water is shallow, the boats floating on the river looked as if they were vehicles running on land. 

Translated by Gu Weizhou

Topographically speaking northern Shaanxi is a loess plateau lying to the north of the Weihe River. Mainly centring around Yan'an and Yulin, the region lies at an elevation of around 800 to 1,800 metres above sea level and is mostly covered with loess between 50 and 150 metres thick. The area around Luochuan has the thickest layer of loess, reaching some 190 metres in depth. High table-like formations, elongated loess mounds and more rounded mounds overlap and are cut by gullies and ravines. A large amount of mud and eroded soil find their way into the Yellow River.

The average temperature here is 9°C and the average rainfall is 300 to 500mm., concentrated during the months of July, August and September. The dry climate does not encourage agriculture and the local people raise sheep for their livelihood.

For transportation to the area, there are flights between Yan'an and Beijing, Taiyuan and Xi'an. There are also flights between Yulin and Xi'an. Most of the region's scenic offerings are to be found around Yan'an, Yulin and Jiaxian.

- 1. Perched on a solitary pillar on a hill in Jiaxian's northern suburbs, the Xianglu Temple rises against a backdrop of endless stretches of loess, not in Shaanxi but in Shanxi. The two provinces are separated by the Yellow River.**
- 2. Caves, niches and Buddhist temples, all bearing ancient inscriptions were carved out of the cliffs of the 1.8-kilometre-long Red Rock Gorge, located some five kilometres north of Yulin County.**





Getting the Picture: Photo-Taking in Xishuangbanna

ARTICLE BY LAM KIN FAI

During the Thanksgiving holidays, we as photography lovers formed a group to go on an excursion to Yunnan's Xishuangbanna.

On March 28, 1991, we, six men and two women strong, boarded a plane in Guangzhou and flew to Kunming, where we changed to a small plane bound for Xishuangbanna. Climate in Kunming is very mild and the average temperature changes only slightly all year round. There are many spots of historical interest in this area. Besides, Lake Dianchi is the best-known scenic spot in Yunnan, a province with no shortage of panoramic landscapes.

The small plane landed on Jinghong, a prefecture seat of Xishuangbanna. Once there we hired a minibus to travel around. But first we duly explained to the driver that we were photographers and came here to take pictures, therefore, we had to stop from time to time in order to take photos of beautiful scenes.

We set out from Jinghong and drove east. Our destinations were Menglun, Mengla and Ganlanba.

Xishuangbanna is a Dai autonomous prefecture. According to a census taken in 1986, Xishuangbanna has a population of over 700,000, spread out over an area of about 20,000 square kilometres, of which Dai nationality people occupied one-third of its total population.

After leaving Xishuangbanna, we then made our way eastward to Yuanyang. During this leg of our journey we would encounter many minority nationalities with different dress and customs which piqued our interest and made us thankful we had brought along our cameras.

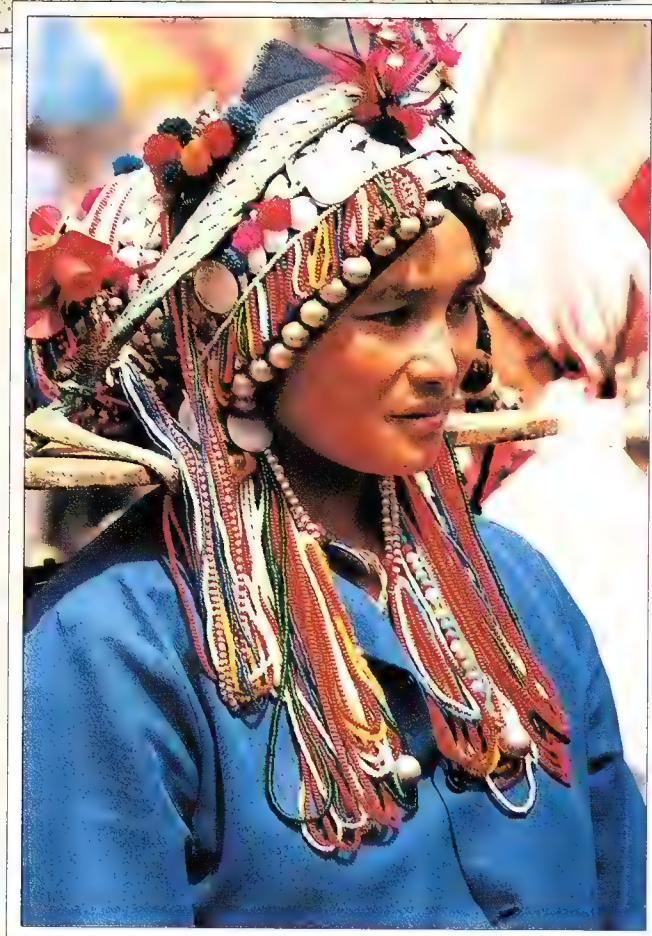


On the other side of the border marker lies Burma (by Leung Wai).





A Dai child monk takes a break from his shopping outside a shop in Menglun (by Li Ping).



On the way from Jinghong to Menghai our party came across this Hani woman whose headdress was very elaborately crafted (by Leung Wai).

The Dai: Elevated Buddhist Believers

The Dai people and their life-style were our main targets. They are mostly attired in their nationality costume. Men usually wear short-sleeved red tunics and blue, black or dark-brown trousers. Their kerchiefs are made of white or red brocades or white or blue cloth. The men used to sport tattoos of Buddhist scriptures and symbols all over their bodies. Women's clothes are simpler but with graceful lines. They are partial to wearing collarless tight tunics and colourful and dark coloured sarongs. Their hair are made into buns at the top of the head, slightly tilted to one side. Adorned on the bun is a hairpiece and some fresh blossoms or artificial flowers in golden colour. We found them elegant and graceful. They were very kind to us though they were somewhat camera-shy before strangers. One of their customs is that people became committed to the monastic life when still very small. No wonder we often would see young monks shuttling to and fro in the streets.

The Dai people believe in Hinayana Buddhism, the so-called "Lesser Vehicle", which had been introduced from Burma and Thailand. This origin is reflected in the name that they use to describe their places of worship, namely "Mian" temples, which are found in almost every village. The name "mian" is possibly related to Burma, which is known in Chinese as "Miandian". In any event, the entry of Buddhism dates back more than a millenium.

Quite often a boy would have to serve as a novice monk at the age of ten, but he is not required to live in a monastery. After a period of time, a formal ceremony would be held for them to become full members of the monastery. Actually, most of them would remain but for a short time. Only a few would stay on to become full-fledged monks. They would learn, however, to read and write and to recite Buddhist scriptures at the monastery.

The traditional Dai house is rather unique in architecture. The Dai people all live in river valleys. Due to the subtropical climate and the low land the weather is rather humid and hot. To stay cool and maintain good ventilation, their houses are all built with bamboo and elevated on stilts. Houses in Xishuangbanna are most typical of the Dai architecture. Dai villages, each usually including some 20 to 70 households, are more often than not situated on the bank of a river or a stream. Shaded by luxuriant trees, a stilted

house occupies an area of 60 to 70 square metres. Its floor is 2.5 metres above ground. On top of a flight of steps is a varandah. Jars of water are placed here. The interior of a Dai house is usually very neat and clean, and divided into two compartments: one for the family only and the other for entertainment and lodgers. Before entering the house, one has to wash himself clean with the waters from the jars. Clothes are also washed here. Even guests have to take off their shoes before entering.

Daluo: On the Border

In the Tropical Plant Institute in Menglun, we saw a lot of rare plants we had never seen before. It was a wonderful chance for us to take pictures. What made us especially keen was that we were approaching the border between China and Laos. Having left Menglun, we headed for Menghai in the west. Unfortunately we came at a wrong time. It was cloudy because of the sharp drop of altitude. There were seldom gorgeous cloud configurations in this season. However, the ethnic people's life and customs would never let us down. We called on many villages on the way and took many pictures of wonderful ethnic clothes which compensated somewhat for the drab gray weather.

Going further southwest from Menghai, we came to Daluo, a settlement of Hani and Blang peoples on the border. At last we found



Though still wearing traditional dress, young Hani girls are distinguished from the older women by their costumes and headdress (by Leung Wai).



Two Yi girls in Yuanyang seem to be enjoying their chat in spite of their precarious position (by Tsang Ip Wah).

the demarcation line between the two countries. We were all very excited, however, we took great care not to violate the border.

The big event in Daluo was visiting the market. We arrived there on Saturday because Sunday was the best market day. That day we noticed that a lot of business was carried out in the market. Even the Burmese crossed the river to buy things. Since the water level was low, they simply waded across. What seemed remarkable at the time was that their sarongs were quite dry after crossing the river. Later, however, I found out that they had rolled their sarongs up to their waists while in the water.

In a border area like this, it was inevitable to meet up with border policemen. One photographer sporting a long beard was mistaken for a foreigner (Daluo was not open to foreigners). It took us quite an effort with help of some supporting documentation to convince the authorities that the great bearded one was a "compatriot", i.e. Chinese.

After Daluo, we headed east for Yuanyang via Jiangcheng. It was quite a long journey and there were not many petrol stations on the way. So our driver brought two kegs of petrol with him. But who would expect another even more serious problem. Perhaps it was due to the poor road conditions and the heavy load or even certain snags with some mechanical parts, but our minibus moved slower and slower. Besides, it tilted to one side. The driver hurried to get off to examine the vehicle, and discovered that the surface of one tyre had been flat. What was alarming was that the petrol containers were made of plastic. The static sparks caused by the running flat tyre could easily set the containers on fire, which then could explode any minute and immolate everybody.

We did not have a replacement and there were still scores of kilometres to go to Jiangcheng. We had no alternative but drove on gingerly until we found a motor garage near a tea farm. The garage man looked at our car and found nothing wrong with it except the tyre. Unfortunately, he had no suitable spare tyres either; however, to help us continue our journey, he dismantled a tyre from his own car and put it on ours. That night we stayed in a factory which was part of the tea farm. To show our gratitude, we fetched some watermelons from our car and invited the hosts to a melon party. While enjoying the melons, we chatted heartily until the wee hours.

Not on Candid Camera

We got to Yuanyang at last. The terraced fields and the ethnic peoples normally would be two excellent themes for picture-taking. Unfortunately, it was not the right growing season and we could not get good shots of the terraced fields. It was a wonderful opportunity to take pictures of the ethnic peoples in

all their costumed splendour. The Yi, Hani, Miao and Miao minority nationalities each had their own distinctive costume. Even though there was no festival or any celebration, they were still colourfully dressed. But it was not easy to capture them on film. At the least we had to do a lot of talking to persuade them and in some cases even had to offer some gifts to them in order to overcome their camera shyness. Of course, nothing rude ever happened to us. Obviously, those ethnic peoples were all kind-natured. But even if they consented to have their photos taken, they would not wait too long. To catch a good shot, one had to be very quick in action. Those who had the camera with auto-focus had better opportunities. The results were still most satisfactory.

A trip to a lush subtropical area like this inhabited by a variety of peoples was a unique experience for everyone of us. There were so much to remember and relish about this journey. On our way back to Hong Kong, we already began to plan another trip to Xishuangbanna during the coming New Year. ©

Translated by Wang Mingjie



Yao women are still attractive despite the relative simplicity of their indigo blue dress (by Tsang Ip Wah).



With their baskets still empty, young Yaos set out on their way to the market at Yuanyang (by Li Ping).



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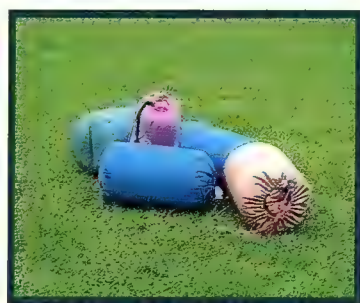
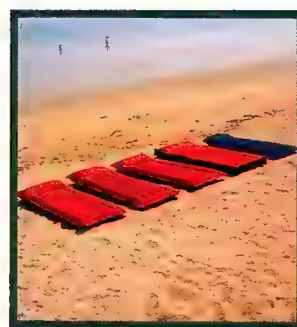
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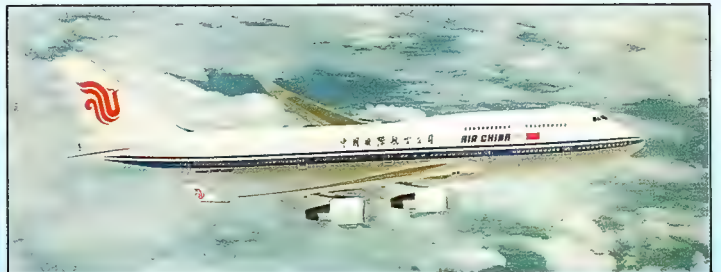
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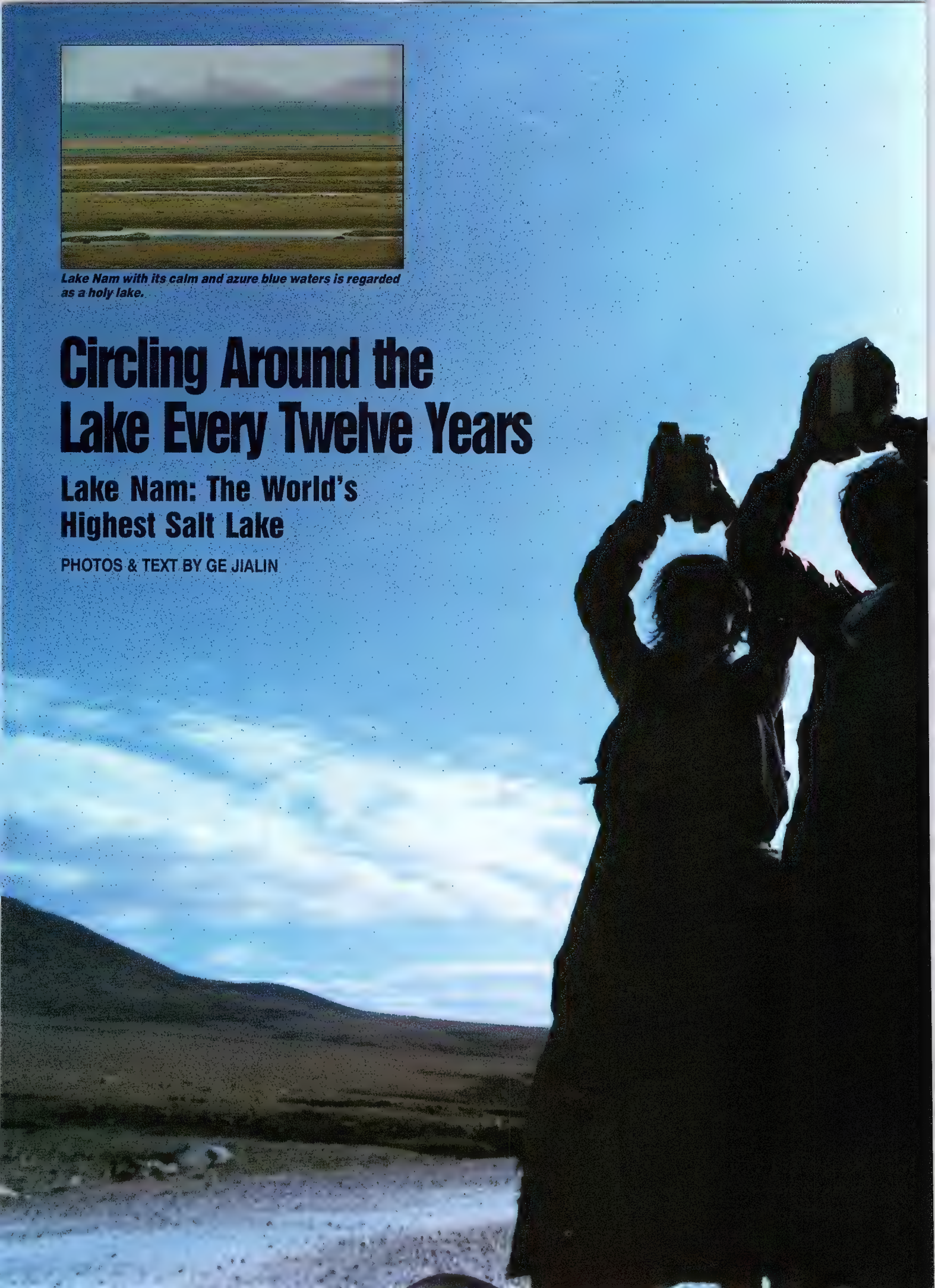


Lake Nam with its calm and azure blue waters is regarded as a holy lake.

Circling Around the Lake Every Twelve Years

**Lake Nam: The World's
Highest Salt Lake**

PHOTOS & TEXT BY GE JIALIN





Last year I went to northern Tibet to visit Lake Nam, the sacred lake of the Tibetan people. On the way I saw thousands of people flowing to the lake. In the Chinese lunar calendar, the year 1991 is the Year of the Sheep, and whenever the Year of the Sheep arrives, Tibetan people come from afar to make a pilgrimage during May to the holy lake.

The Tibetan calendar is very similar to the lunar calendar of the Han nationality, taking twelve animals and the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire and earth) to symbolize the year. The year 1982, for example, is the Year of the Dog in the Chinese lunar calendar, and in the Tibetan calendar it is the Year of the Water Dog; the year 1991 is the Year of the Sheep in the Chinese lunar calendar, and it is the Year of the Iron Sheep in the Tibetan calendar.

I got on a bus in Lhasa and went northward along the Qinghai-Tibet Highway to Damxung. In May, the Damxung grassland was lush and verdant. As our bus passed the main peak of the Nyangqéntanglha (7,111 metres above sea level),

Pious Buddhist followers walk skirting the Zhaxi Peninsula, prostrating themselves on every step forward. It take a couple of hours to circle around the peninsula.





we saw a few dark shadows of yurts on the distant mountain slopes and young Tibetan women wielding whips driving herds of cattle and sheep towards distant pasturelands. Their red scarves reflecting sunshine caught one's eye.

Walking Through the Ritual

Finally, we arrived in the Lake Nam area at a height of 4,718 metres above sea level. This is the highest saltwater lake in the world. We travelled through the lake district for a full hour and saw many Tibetan pilgrims on the way, some driving yaks, some riding horses, and some sitting on tractors, all carrying tents and cooking utensils with them. Whole families, men and women, old and young, formed a long stream moving towards the banks of the lake.

Due to the changes of weather and geology, the volume of lake water has obviously reduced, and it is said that the water level has dropped by nearly a hundred metres during the last ten thousand years. On the lakeside stands the Zhaxi Peninsula, ten square kilometres in area, formed of calcareous rocks, which was the destination of the pilgrims. I followed the stream of people to the peninsula.

The peninsula has many caves, in one of which is a temple. As I approached it, I saw the smoke of burning incense curling up and heard the chanting of scriptures and bugles. Everywhere on the ground outside the temple, the pilgrims who had arrived earlier were busy setting up tents, or lighting stoves to prepare meals and Tibetan milk tea. The usually quiet peninsula had become a busy fair ground. I had not brought a tent with me, so I took my sleeping bag into a cave to put up for the night. I followed the example of the Tibetans and spread my sleeping bag on a layer of sheep droppings. It was warm, soft and odourless, and I slept soundly.

When I walked out of the cave the next morning, the sun had not yet risen, but rose coloured clouds were hanging over the sky near the horizon, and the lake was covered by a thick layer of mist. I headed for the lakeside. To my surprise, I saw many figures moving about on the banks in the mist. The pilgrims had begun their day of circling around the lake; in single file they moved forward clockwise. Aged men shook their scriptural wheels, old women chanted incantations, and young people kowtowed once every step after having piously laid a stone on a mani wall. These were some of the activities of the so-called circling around the lake. They do not circle around the lake as it is too large. It took them two hours to circle round the Zhaxi Peninsula if they walked fast, but it took half a day if they were slow. They performed this activity three times a day from morning till night. If they went around the entire circumference of the lake it would take them at least a fortnight.



Once every twelve years Tibetan herdsmen come with their sheep to live in the tents set on the bank of the lake.



The early comers occupy a favourable position so as they can face the Holy Lake day and night.



The celebration activity begins with the partakers standing before the Mani wall, kowtowing and adding to the Mani wall a piece of stone.



Partakers coming to the Zhaxi Peninsula should enter the lake area through this "gate".



Encountering friends or relatives by the lake Tibetan herdsmen greet and converse with each other.



This Tibetan suffering from eye disease has come specifically to treat his eyes with the lake water which is believed to be a cure of diseases.



Leading a horse the Holy Lake worshippers start off impervious to cold winds.



Magic Water and a Legend

As such a high altitude, Lake Nam has rugged natural conditions, and the sunshine causes great changes in the weather, which can differ sharply even within a day. It is not unusual to encounter a snowstorm even in mid-summer. When winter begins to set in, the lake resembles a steamer, with steam rising from its surface, but the water freezes within one or two days as soon as severe winter cold arrives. Similarly, in spring the ice in the lake melts in one or two days. It is just because of these unique natural features that Lake Nam has become the sacred lake for the Tibetan people.

However, beautiful legends have also added lustre to Lake Nam as a sacred lake. As legend has it, Lake Nam and Nyainqêntanglha, a holy mountain, were two lovers who loved each other dearly. Lake Nam became a lake, while Nyainqêntanglha turned into a 7088-metre-high mountain. Irrigated by melted snow the foot of the mountain gradually became pasturelands for people to graze horses, cattle and sheep, and the water from it was used to wet barley fields to ensure a good harvest. To express their gratitude to Nyainqêntanglha, the Tibetan people nowadays turn to face the mountain and pray to it when they come on their pilgrimage.

The water in the lake is considered holy water. According to their beliefs infants baptized in it will grow into heroes; aged people will become clear-headed and sharp-eyed when they wash their head and eyes with it; and diseased people will become healed when they apply the water to the troubled part of their body. Whether or not the holy water can cure disease has not been verified, but it is true that the water has not been polluted and contains many kinds of minerals and chemical elements that are beneficial to the human body. It is very clear. Just like any kind of mineral water, the holy water is not harmful if you drink it.

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

Northern Tibet and Lake Nam

What is called northern Tibet is a fairly even plateau lying between the Kunlun, Tanggula, Gangdisê and Nyainqêntanglha mountain ranges. It actually comprises two-thirds of the whole of Tibet. Usually it is called the Northern Tibetan Plateau, or Qiangtang in Tibetan, meaning "the highland in the north". Its average altitude is 4,500 metres above sea level. The Northern Tibetan Plateau is one of the regions with the greatest number of lakes. Salt lakes and salt swamps are abundant. If the lakes are put together, they total 30,000 square kilometres. Lake Nam is the most famous one. With an area of 1,920 square kilometres, it is the second biggest saltwater lake in China. The lake has three karst islands whipped by the ageless strong winds into fascinating shapes.

Kneeling before a Mani wall this devout Buddhist with his palms put together is saying his prayers before the Holy Lake and Divine Mountain.





Bai Nationality Tombs in Shundang, Yunnan Province

PHOTOS BY HU JIANGUO
TEXT BY ZHANG NAN & HU JIANGUO



Bai tombs constructed during the late Qing Dynasty

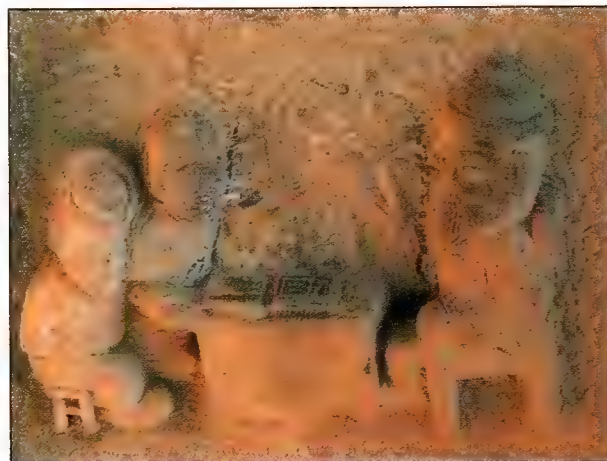
The district of Shundang in Yunlong County in the Dali Bai Nationality Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province contains an ancient brine pit, once operated by people surnamed Yang, Dong, Zhao and Li, which at present, are important family names. These salt well owners and managers were buried in mountain slopes near the wells. Their tombs gradually developed into a Bai nationality burial ground.

Prior to the Yuan and Ming Dynasties (1271-1644), it was a practice of the Bai to dispose of their dead by cremation in accordance with their Buddhist faith. Relics of crematoria, once practised a wide scale, can be seen to this day.

By the middle and latter part of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) the doctrine of Confucius and Mencius was accepted by the Bai people and became the prevailing Bai belief. The disposal of the dead by fire was considered betrayal as well as an unfilial act. Burial in the ground thus replaced cremation in the course of time. As a result, groups of ancient tombs can be seen in the village of Shundang, Baishi Township, Yunlong County.

Upon arriving at the spot, I discovered that the Bai tombs are located in the western portion and face east towards a river. The tomb gates are round and arched, and arranged in rows. At first glance they could easily be mistaken for entrances to abandoned air raid shelters. The structure of each tomb gate is more or less similar, made of locally produced red sandstone. On the left and right columns of the gate are placed a stone arched beam, with stone pillars carved on its outside. Lions are carved on the head of each pillar. Three tablets and four pillars are found inside each tomb gate. The incised marble grave epitaph stands in the centre of the grave area. The tablets standing on left and right are smaller than the epitaph tablet, and contain the family history and biography of the deceased. Great attention is paid to the architecture of the grave, since the Bai nationality people believe that

The stone horse conveys an impression of fierce animation and, in fact, is regarded as an inhabitant of the spiritual world which guards the tomb from evil.



the grave is a place whereby the dearly departed will enter another world to live and enjoy life in the hereafter.

In front of the grave epitaph is a small stone altar, on which are placed offerings to the deceased. The left and right bases of the tomb gate are carved with images of a lion, dragon, elephant, deer and horse. Door guardians appear on both sides. All stone statues are carved in an exaggerated manner, with simple strokes and traditional Chinese art done in freehand style, and characterized by vivid facial expressions and bold outline. The sculptures convey an impression of the awesome might of the tomb guardians and the different shapes of tomb animals similarly suggest supernatural power. In effect, they have been deified by the Bai. The guardian, in the Bai pantheon, guards the soul and is the dvarapala of the grave. Apart from enhancing the appearance of the grave site, the prestige of the dead and suppressing evil, the sculpted tomb guardians and animals convey the basic dignity and relative status of the surviving family.

In the overall layout of the tomb site, shape and form of man and

animal statues, as well as the actual coffin burial, Bai practices are not much different from practices of the Han people, suggesting a strong Han influence. But for the actual art of tomb carving, the Han nationality in the Central Plains of China has tended to be more finely detailed, whereas the Bai tomb carvings express a simple and plain elegance reminiscent of sculptures in China from the Tang Dynasty (618-907) to the Ming.

Translated by He Fei

Top: Dragon and fish carved on a stone altar

Left : An attractive layout, but not overly ornate, preserving a style reminiscent of pre-Qing Dynasty craftsmanship. A father and child play chess while a daughter looks on.

Bottom: A dancer (left) performing the fan dance, while the musician carrying the sheng plays with his beard (right). The happy facial expressions and loose movement of the figures suggests that music was a popular form of entertainment.



For the Birds

The Bird Market in Hong Kong

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY WONG KIN MAN



This handsome bird cage houses the object of a bird lover's affection.



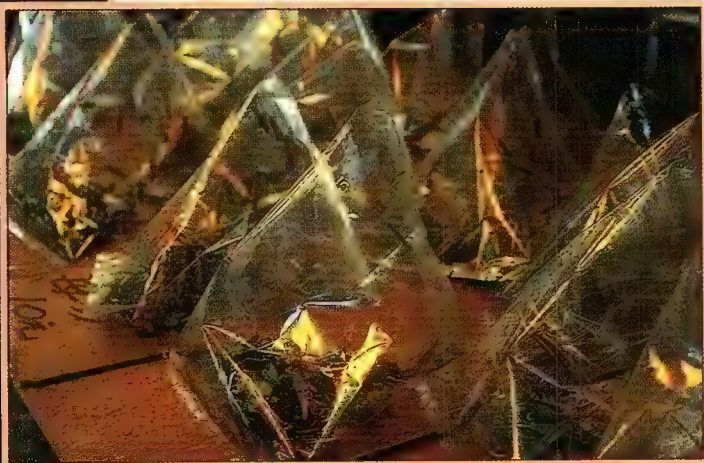
The entrance to Hong Lok Street near Argyle Street is where bird lovers gather with their beloved pets.



When the cages are placed side by side, the birds within them can express their heartfelt emotion to each other by chirping.



Grasshoppers serve as bird feed.



Besides pursuing the latest pastimes such as taking drives, horse-race betting, playing electronic games and visiting karaoke lounges, many Hong Kong people also engage in the more traditional Chinese hobbies such as rearing birds and the Bird Market in Mongkok on the Kowloon Peninsula is the place where the birds hang out in a manner of speaking. Although the Bird Market is actually a short and narrow street, it is well known as the place for bird lovers to admire and shop for their feathered friends and exchange tips on rearing birds as well as picking up supplies.

The Bird Market is about two to three streets west of where Argyle Street crosses Nathan Road. Coming out of the Mongkok Mass Transit Railway Station I was headed west along Argyle Street. It was shortly after I came out of the station exit that I noticed some men with bird cages in their hands braving their way through the crowd and heavy traffic. To protect their sweet singing pets, they would hold the cages up high while moving forward against the up-coming streams of pedestrians. The cages were held up and lowered back down in absolute unison that made one imagine that their owners were actually doing their morning exercise together. The songs of the birds and the horns of the cars harmonized after a fashion to become a unique symphony.

Soon I arrived at the entrance of the Bird Market where the bird lovers gathered to watch and show off their pets.

The Competition – Civilized or Otherwise

Most of the frequent visitors to the Bird Market are experienced bird raisers. Besides exchanging their experience in rearing birds, they also welcome each other's comments on their pets. Sometimes they would cheer in exhilaration and sometimes they would shake their heads in disappointment depending on their impression of a particular bird. Some would compliment the perfect build of a specimen saying that it was sleek and slim while others would marvel at the beautiful dextrous voice of a song-bird which was capable of switching to singing its competitor's melody in the middle of a competition. The birds which were not so smart were, however, frankly labelled as dumb and slow by the critics.

The above actually describes the more civil type of competition that the birds could take part in — the singing competition. The categories treasured were the sweetest voice, the

best poise and the most beautiful feathers. The red-billed leiothrix and the swallows are among the most common contestants in such competitions.

A more hostile contest starts with the two bird owners holding the birds in their cages next to each other. These fighting birds, usually thrushes, would become agitated at the sight of each other and, with bulging eyes, they would start jumping nervously in the cages as if ready to pounce onto each other at any time. When both birds were bursting with avian anger, one of the birds would be released into the cage of the other bird and a fierce fight would begin and not according to Marquis of Queensbury rules. They could thrust and attack each other with their sharp beaks and extended claws; however, the fight would be normally be over within two to three minutes with the vanquished animal bleeding and losing some feathers. Its dissipated master would then release his bird and let fate be its new master.

The Special Aroma of the Bird Market

Bird cages were ubiquitous in the Bird Market. They are lined up on the ground, stacked one of top of an other and hung from ceilings and beams and pillars. The birds separated in their cages would communicate with their songs and seemed to entertain each other by strutting their best "dance" in their small cages.

Besides the melodious chirping of the birds, another typical feature of the Bird Market is its special smell which blended the strains of wet mould, bird droppings, grasshoppers and other bird fodder and the appealing aroma of the smell reducing powder. What was merely a strange odour to me seemed to be a fragrance which attracted the many bird lovers to the street every morning before the break of dawn, mimicing the waking habits of their feathered friends.

Most of the shops in the Bird Market were in small wooden cottages. Besides offering different kinds of birds, they also sell bird cages, accessories and bird feeds. A quick count showed that there were about 30 shops and among them there were several that sold other pets such as dogs and crickets.

The owners of those shops were always busy. They were either moving the bird cages from under the shade into the sun to let their inhabitants enjoy the warmth of the sun or covering cages with white cloth to keep their merchandise



Cricket fights are an interesting diversion found in the Bird Market.



Some exquisitely crafted cages for sale in the Bird Market have a price tag of thousands of Hong Kong dollars.



Parrots in the Bird Market are affable hosts, greeting customers on behalf of their master.





After the Wan Lai Teahouse was torn down, this hot pot restaurant became a new hangout for bird lovers.

from getting overheated under the sun or becoming ill when the strong wind blows. Suddenly I saw a shop owner spraying water on his birds which obviously welcomed the daily shower. They merrily jumped up and down while shaking off the water on their feathers.

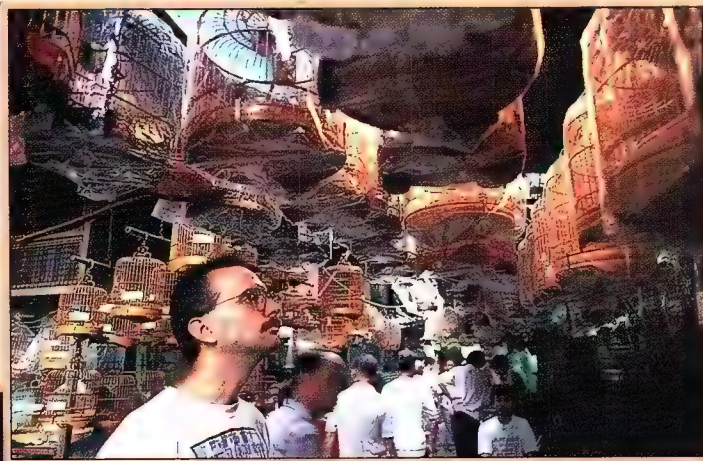
The four walls inside the shops were all covered with cages stacked up like so many building blocks. Experienced bird lovers who came to pick new pets would also bring their own bird along to help "interview" a new roost-mate. After locating a prospective purchase, a potential owner would put his cage up next to that of the other bird and observe to see whether it would become alert, start singing or prepare to fight. I turned when I heard someone said "Hello" and discovered that it was a parrot sending its greetings on behalf of its master, the shopowner. They were the unpaid salesmen of the shopowners.

Asia's Biggest Bird Market

The Bird Market in Hong Kong may be small but it has a reputation out of proportion to its size. I have seen camera crews from television stations based overseas coming to film documentaries about it. The shopowners were not at all excited about such encounters because most of them have seen it all not just once but many times.

The Hong Kong Bird Market is not the only bird market in Asia. There are three such markets in the region. The one in Hong Kong is the biggest and the only one that opens every day and is naturally the most renowned.

The actual name of the street where the Bird Market is located is Hong Lok Street, but it was not the original site of the Bird Market. The Bird Market was first opened on Kok Lun Street on Hong Kong Island; however, it was destroyed during an air raid in the war 50 years ago. It was during the 1950s that the Bird Market moved to its present location and business in birds started booming.



Foreigners visiting the Bird Market often leave with a finely fashioned cage as a souvenir.


The Bird Market on Hong Lok Street did not merely materialize out of nowhere. The credit for its incubation goes to a Chinese teahouse — the Ki Heung (Spectacular Fragrance) Teahouse which used to be located near the street. It was where the bird lovers would gather and hawkers of bird feeds, such as grasshoppers, would come to solicit business. The hawkers eventually settled down on Hong Lok Street and began selling birds as well as bird feeds. More hawkers joined them later and shops engaged in other activities originally located there became lower in the pecking order and many of their owners decided to move elsewhere. In this manner the Bird Market was hatched.

The Ki Heung Teahouse was later torn down and the bird lovers found their new roost at the Wan Lai (Floating Cloud)



This pair of parrots dancing in the cage attracts a crowd.

Teahouse nearby; however, even the Wan Lai could not escape from the wheel of time. It too was torn down not very long ago and the bird lovers had to move again, this time to a hotpot restaurant in the neighbour of the Bird Market. Entering the restaurant, one could immediately see the bird cages hanging on the walls while their owners sat and chatted with each other about their birds and at the same time enjoyed tea and dim sum.

And they better enjoy it while they can as the Government's redevelopment plans for the city are not only to affect the bird lovers, but also the Bird Market which will face demolition soon. It will be moved into the Urban Council Mongkok Building Complex scheduled to open in 1993. It would be the last choice of the bird lovers to nest if they could have a say. They are afraid that after moving indoors under a concrete roof the birds might not sing as joyously as they do now breathing clean air and basking in the warm sunlight. 

Translated by Ursula Yeung

An Appreciation of Yang Zhiyin's Ink Paintings

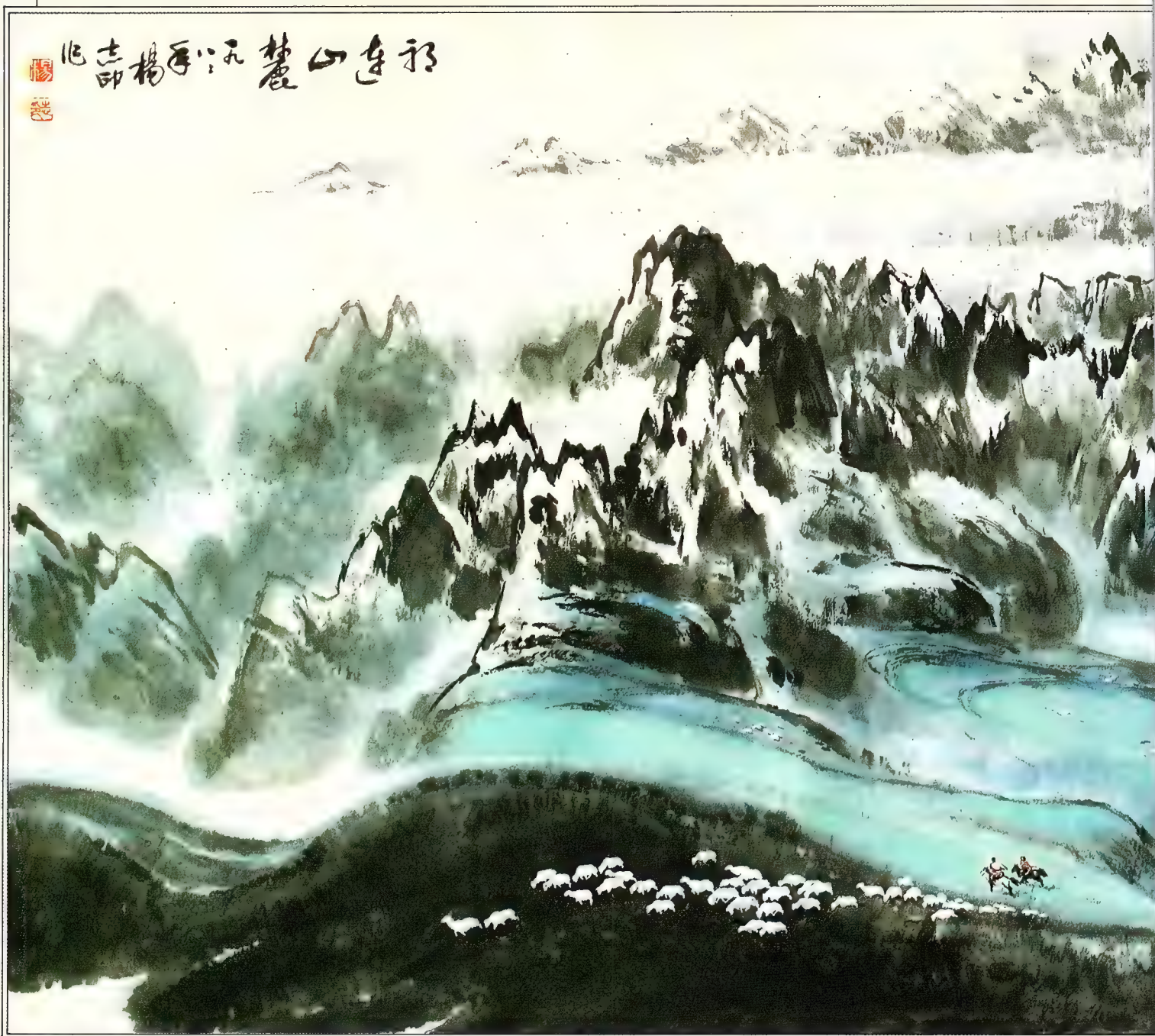
PHOTOS BY LI ZHIYING

ARTICLE BY BAI YAN

Born in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, Yang Zhiyin devoted much of his artistic efforts during his early years to woodcut. In recent years, however, he has been concentrating on Chinese ink painting. Breathing with a strong sense of life, Yang's works are characterized by a bold, vigorous and plain style, which are in fact most appropriate for capturing the beauty of northwestern China – an area which offers a stark yet panoramic aesthetic appeal.

The art of a painter stems from events in the life he or she has experienced, so people say. What the artist paints is a reflection of life – the source of his creativity, and a much treasured source at that. Having travelled through the length and breadth of northwestern China, Yang has seen virtually all of its historic sites and scenic spots. His trips took him to its villages and pastureland where he gained familiarity with the way of life of ethnic minorities living there as well as the various manifestations of nature. This latter aspect is similar to the approach taken by traditional painters. Often they would lead the equivalent of a farmer's life and would strive for the simplicity of direct contact with nature and an understanding of natural principles. The objective was to learn the true essence of objects, be they animate or inanimate.

The desire to portray such a true essence has influenced the portrayal of motifs. The Chinese do not combine objects except according to their natural



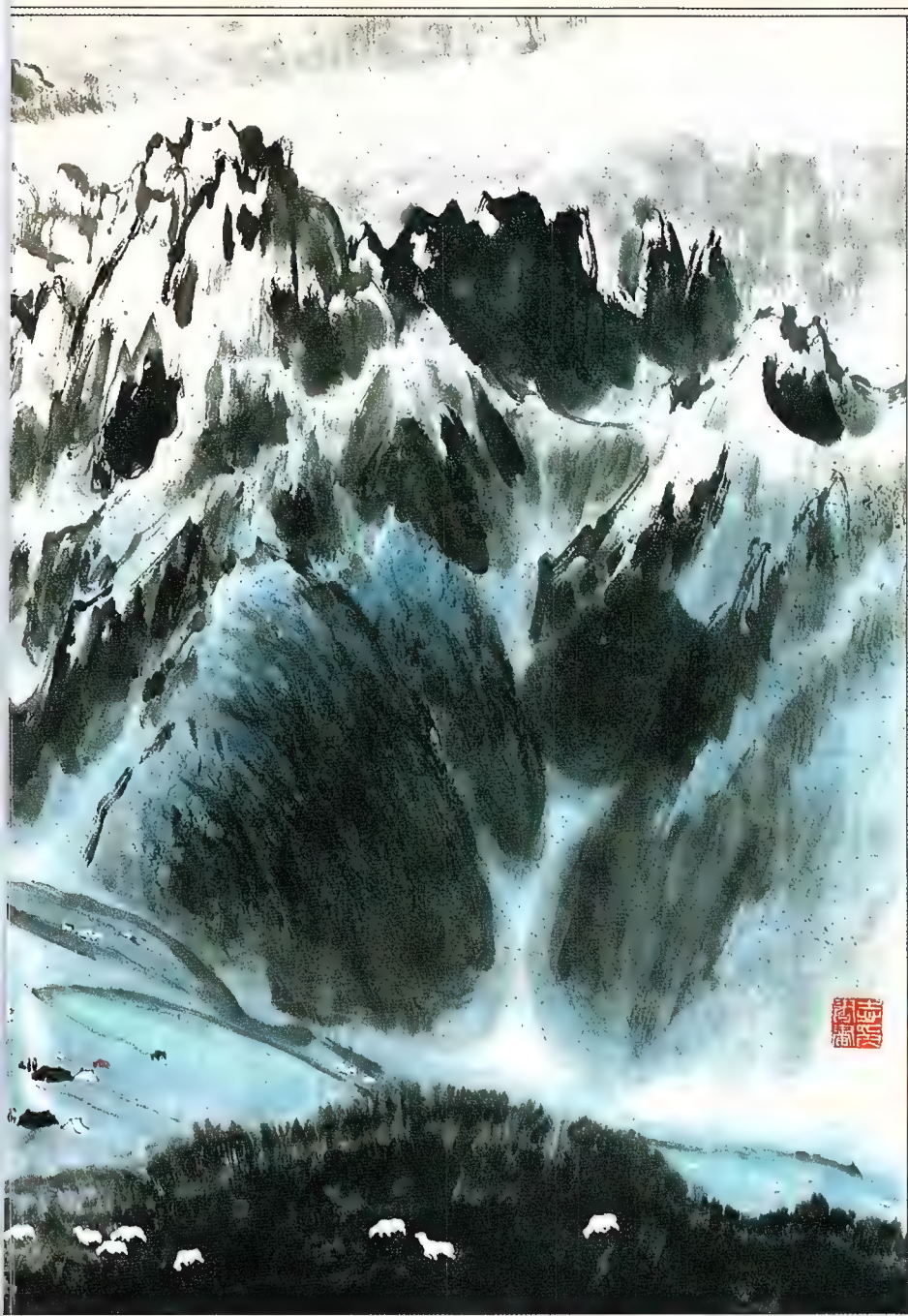
habitat and related objects. The emphasis on natural relationships tends to stimulate our intellectual enjoyment of these relationships.

The desire to understand and portray such a true essence is perhaps why when looking at Yang's depiction of scenes from northwestern China, we sense an episode from the real life of the painter himself. We also understand the emotions the painter has felt being brought alive in the various scenes of his paintings.

Yang Zhiyin has inherited the legacy of traditional Chinese ink painting in contours, strokes, pigments, etc. Borrowing features peculiar to woodcut, he has created techniques in ink painting which make his themes and concepts rich both in appearance and the feelings it evokes. Yang Zhiyin succeeds in producing flowing and simple lines by means of his energetic and smooth brush strokes in his painting. In addition to giving us correct shapes, he is at his artistic best in portraiture, in which he reproduces vividly the changing countenance of people. His depiction of the eyes in his subjects, in particular, makes the viewer feel the inner spirit portrayed in the person painted by the artist.

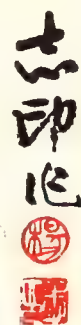


Except for the *Pastureland* shown the next page which is priced at HK\$30,000, the other three paintings featured here are priced at HK\$20,000 each. Any postal order for these and other paintings can be made through HK China Tourism Press, the publisher of this magazine. Enquiries are also welcome.



At the Foot of Qilian Mountains

This is a realistic landscape painting by the artist, who gives us a view of high hills snow-covered all the year round. The pastureland is vast, with luxuriant growth of grass most suitable for grazing sheep. Ever since the Western Han Dynasty in the 2nd century B.C. the grassland has been a key junction along the ancient Silk Road as well as a battleground for cavalymen, being an ideal grazing field for horses as well. Viewed from an elevation level with the mountains in this picture, the landform of the Qilian Mountains is portrayed from near to far distance in good perspective. The composition is good and plain. The painter uses a technique of traditional Chinese painting, texture wrinkle, to paint the veins of rocks. At the same time, he employs a black-white method used in woodcut to paint nearby pastures in heavy strokes in contrast with the white sheep. This brings out the contour of Mongolian herdsmen in action. The painter succeeds in giving us a sense of the mountains' loftiness and the scale of the environs.



Pastureland Resounds with the Noise of Sheep and Herdsman

This picture shows Mongolian herdsman tending cattle at the foot of the Qilian Mountains in western Gansu Province. The herdsman uses a knout to drive the sheep. The painter nearly succeeds in making us hear the very sound of the herdsman and the noise of the flock through this vivid portrayal. The picture is taken up in a large portion by the snow-covered mountain, which gives the high hill great prominence. The stern beauty of the magnificent mountains of northwestern China is therefore brought into full play. The painter has made a departure from the concept of traditional ink painting while still using traditional techniques. He uses a water spray, a woodcut method, to bring home to us the light and dark sides of the snow-covered mountain in a three-dimensional way on the wrinkled Xuancheng paper made of fine, white bamboo pulp. This is an innovation on the part of the painter, revealing his bold intention to strike out into a new path in art.




Tambur

This painting is about a girl of the ethnic Kazak nationality playing her plucked stringed musical instrument called a *tambur*. It is a small sketch of a scene drawn from life on the steppes. The painter vividly presents the features of the Kazak society – Kazak song and rhythm and camel husbandry. By means of traditional Chinese techniques in painting, the painter first sketches the camels and the girl. Ink is then added – both heavy and light plus water to bring out the fur texture of the young camels and the mother camel to good effect. The hair on the young looks tender, though heavy. The hair on the mother camel is light but more luxuriant. The attention to detail here is typically Chinese. The composition of *Tambur* is simple. By consummate skill the painter places his main object, the girl, in the centre of the picture, but the girl does not dominate, reflecting the basic harmony between man and nature typical of Chinese paintings. The picture is dotted with loess colour as foil to give us an idea of the vast expanse of desert. While this picture does not depict a traditional motif, it reflects the uniquely Chinese development in art of using new techniques and principles without necessarily discarding traditional methods.



Dunhuang Grottoes

Dunhuang, in Gansu Province, a vital point on the ancient Silk Road, is the place where Buddhism first thrived in its earliest days in China – during and after the Han and before the Tang dynasties. Murals, sculptures, Buddhist canons, engraved copies of sutras, etc. are all found here as one of China's most treasured heritages of culture and art. It is successfully reproduced in ink painting here by Yang Zhiyin. The painter uses a long scroll to paint a panoramic view of Dunhuang from a wide angle view on a composition which is rather simple. The grottoes are in the background. The centre of the picture is the nine-storey Mogao Cave, the most famous of the Dunhuang Grottoes, surrounded by palm trees. The altitude of the entire scene is compressed because of the picture's short width, with sandy hills used as background. The painter succeeds in reproducing Dunhuang Grottoes in its entirety in the vast desert setting. Combining lines, strokes, dots and pigments, the painter paints his picture in a traditional Chinese manner, using only a few brush strokes. The heavy and light strokes are used to maximum advantage so that wood, spring and sandy hills are clearly distinguished. Yang Zhiyin's powerful and vigorous lines have succeeded in providing us an excellent picture of the stark beauty found in northwestern China.  Translated by He Fei

志印



紅燈牌鞭炮煙花

RED LANTERN FIRECRACKERS AND FIREWORKS

The "Red Lantern" Brand fireworks managed by our Holdings Corp. available in a wide range of varieties, may be divided into two main categories: the large type and toy type. According to their performance, the toy type fireworks are subdivided into many varieties: fountains, hand-held novelties, nail and hanging wheels, ground spinning wheels and jumping novelties, floral shells, parachutes, rockets and others.

They are well-produced, beautiful and attractively packaged, available in assorted designs, with P.V.C. packing, blister card, safe, giving display of radiant beauty and a clear, loud, sound effect. In recent years, the production of firecrackers and fireworks has seen rapid development, with quality much improved. Many new items are produced to meet the demands of the international market while the quantity is constantly increasing. They are exported to more than fifty countries and regions of five continents, especially the large type fireworks which have been displayed in the U.S.A., Japan, Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong and other countries and regions, and are highly appreciated by the consumers. In September, 1986, the "Red Lantern" Display shells won the "Monaco International Fireworks Show Competition."



火藥發明於中國 烟花起源於湖南



Gunpowder was invented in China
and Hunan is where fireworks originated



湖南省鞭炮煙花進出口公司

**HUNAN PROVINCIAL
FIRECRACKERS & FIREWORKS
IMP. & EXP. CORP.**

地址：中國湖南長沙市五一東路四號

電話：447825 電掛：9684長沙

傳真：444125

電傳：98162 HPFFC CN

ADDRESS: 4 WU YI ROAD E,
CHANGSHA, CHINA

TEL: 447825


CABLE: 9684 CHANGSHA

FAX: 444125

TELEX: 98162 HPFFC CN



GRAFFIANTIN

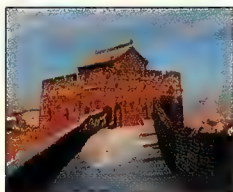


The corporation exports various kinds of men's wear, ladies' wear, and children's wear made of fabrics like cotton fabrics, woollen fabrics, linen fabrics, polyester fabrics, and cotton, wool, silk, linen, or man-made fibre-blended fabrics, as well as accessories for the garment industry.

On the other hand, we import garment fabrics, accessories, packaging materials, and garment production equipment, and contract orders for processing supplied raw materials to buyers' specifications, processing imported raw materials, compensation trade, etc.

ZHEJIANG GARMENTS IMP. & EXP. CORP.

No. 18 Xixia Ling Beishan Road, Hangzhou, China Tel: 771424 Postcode: 310007 Cable: 0749 HANGZHOU Telex: 351060 351061 GMTHZ CN Fax: 0571-771761 722934



The sun is going down at Gubeikou Pass, lending the Great Wall and much of the hills and even the early snow on them a warm red glow.

Built in 1570 during the Ming Dynasty, this section of the Great Wall in Hebei snakes along the Jinshan Ridge at Bakeshiyang of Luanping County, between Beijing and Chengde. In spite of the sharp undulations of the surrounding hills, the terrain of this section of the Great Wall is comparatively low and gentle, making it easier for enemies to attack. The walls were therefore more solidly built with towers for different purposes, especially watch-towers, close to one another. The highest point affords a distant view of the city of Beijing.

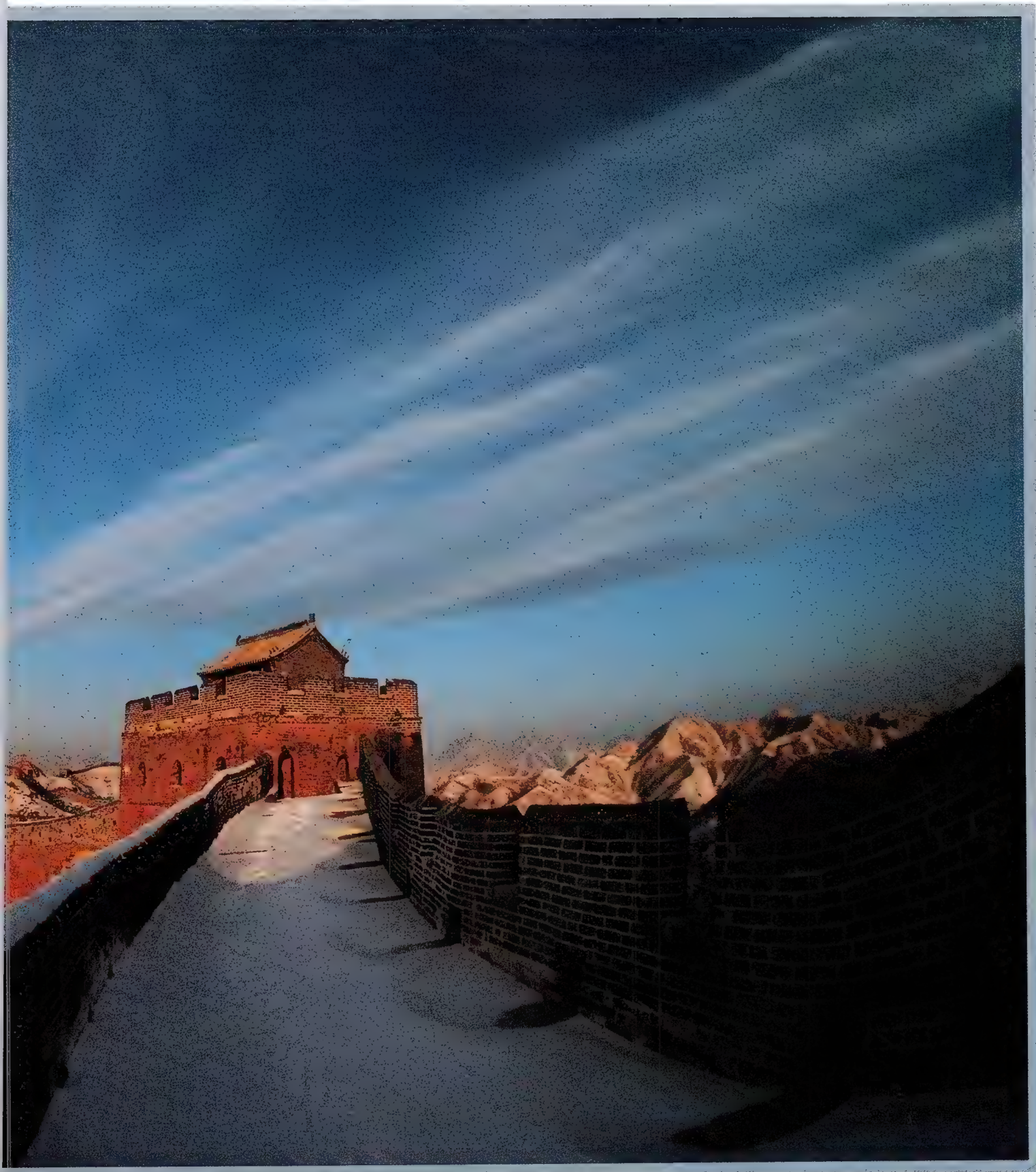


The Great Wall a



Jinshan Ridge

PHOTOGRAPHER: LI YINGJIE





Lianyungang

The Starting Point of the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway

PHOTOS BY CHAPMAN LEE
TEXT BY M. F. CHAN

In September, 1990 in western China, another railway joined China and the Soviet Union. Thus Lianyungang in the centre of China's east coast becomes the eastern bridgehead of a new Euro-Asian continental bridge.

Lianyungang is an ice-free, deep-water port. It's located in the northeastern part of Jiangsu Province, with the Yellow Sea on the east and separated from Korea and Japan by sea. Owing to its favourable geographical location, Lianyungang has always been one of China's foreign trade centres since ancient times. As early as the seventh century, it was a centre of salt production.

The history of Lianyungang can be traced back to a very remote past. Cliff paintings were discovered in 1979 at the foot of Mount Jinping on the outskirts of the city. They were sculpted on giant and even black rocks. Textual research shows that this place was once the site where the Dongyi tribe worshipped Heaven, the earth and spirits of

animals and plants. As relics of the neolithic era these ancient, simple cliff paintings give a realistic picture of the tribal life in a primitive society. They are unique in the country.

After he unified China more than 2,000 years ago, Emperor Qin Shihuang ordered Xu Fu, an alchemist who took with him 3,000 boys and girls to sail to three so-called fairy mountains — Penglai, Fangzhang and Yingzhou to seek elixirs of long life. Xu Fu never returned. Some today maintain that the place where Xu Fu went was Japan. Xu was alleged to have brought there not only 3,000 boys and girls, but also relatively advanced production techniques, tools and utensils. A god of agriculture worshipped by local Japanese probably refers to Xu Fu. Today Japanese come to visit Gangyu County of Lianyungang, the native town of Xu Fu, every year.

The stone-carved paintings of the Eastern Han Dynasty found on Kongwang Mountain on the city's outskirts present pictures of 108

This train station by the harbour marks the eastern bridgehead of the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway (by Ma Yiu Chun).





◀◀ Shops and supermarkets have an ample supply of goods.



Buddhas and images of the people from Western Regions. They are the country's earliest extant Buddhist stone-carved pictures, predating by 200 years those of the Mogao Cave at Dunhuang in Gansu Province on the ancient Silk Road. They not only provide fresh information for the research of the history of Chinese art, but also provide evidence suggesting that Buddhism was also introduced from India to China by the Silk Road on the Sea as well as from overland.

More than one thousand years ago during the ninth century, a Japanese monk by the name of Entin came to China to seek the Buddhist truth. He reached present-day Xi'an via Lianyungang, and studied in Xi'an for four years and ten months. On his way back home his ship drifted for ten days on the sea near Lianyungang. He left behind diaries of five days which are the earliest written records by a foreigner about Lianyungang, then called Haizhou.

First Class Harbour

In 1984 Lianyungang became one of the 14 coastal cities opened to the outside world for direct commerce and investment.

Located 30 kilometres away from the city proper, Lianyungang's port is an ideal natural harbour, surrounded by mountains and islands, built in 1933 and greatly expanded in recent years. The port facilities here represent one of China's eight major harbours. Today the harbour boasts 17 berths, of which 13 can anchor vessels of over ten thousand tonnes. It has trade contacts with more than 270 ports in 83 countries and regions throughout the world. Its annual handling capacity amounts to 16.4 million tonnes. Lianyungang has five container and two general cargo regular sea routes to Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand and other countries and regions.

To keep pace with expanded economic activity, Lianyungang harbour still has projects under construction. The 6,700-metre-long West Embankment linking the harbour and Liandao Island is the longest in the country. After its completion scheduled for 1992 a bay 30 square kilometres in area will be formed for building 100 deep-water berths. By the end of this century it is expected that Lianyungang's harbour will become an important port with berths of various sizes and with industry, commerce and trade comparable to any of the well-known modernized harbours throughout the world.



Shengqinggong Tea Shop, set up over 70 years ago, is one of the three "long-standing shops" in Lianyungang (by Ma Yiu Chun).

Convenient Transport a Spur to Commerce

In September 1990, a railway in western China was connected with a Soviet railway at the Alatau Mountain Pass in Xinjiang. Thereafter a Euro-Asian intercontinental bridge joining the Pacific and Atlantic stretched from Lianyungang of China in the east to Rotterdam of the Netherlands in the west. It runs across China and links the European and Asian continents, opening a speedy and economical transportation route for trade between Asia and Europe. In air transportation, Lianyungang has direct air-lines to Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou and will be gradually expanded into an international air transport centre as well. Adjacent to Lianyungang harbour, three counties, namely Donghai, Ganyu and Guanyun of Lianyungang municipality and its four districts, namely Haizhou, Xipu, Yantai and Lianyun have been successively opened to the outside world for commercial transactions.

Since opening to the outside, Lianyungang City has each year sent large numbers of labourers, engineers and technicians abroad to export techniques and launch joint fishing operations. The city exports over 1,200 kinds of commodities to more than 50 countries and regions.

In the meantime, Lianyungang has continuously attracted more and more foreign investment. There are now more than 100 foreign invested enterprises. Among them are 35 joint ventures.

The Economic Development Area which initiated construction in 1985 is located 20

kilometres away from the city proper and 11 kilometres away from the harbour. A top-grade highway from the city proper to the harbour passes through its edges. The first open area including 1.3 square kilometres is complete with various facilities to serve investors.

Lianyungang has opened its doors both to China and the outside world. Behind it is the vast hinterland of 11 provinces and regions while before it lies the ocean leading to other parts of the world.

Translated by Anne Yan

Lianyungang's Famous Produce

Famous products of Lianyungang include two major categories — arts and crafts and produce from both land and sea. According to ancient books, 1,260 years ago there emerged in Lianyungang an artisan with superb skills. The "queen's dressing table" and "wine cups and music instruments" he made were equipped with ingeniously-designed robots.

Arts and crafts of Lianyungang include shell carving pictures made from polished sea shells and feather paintings made of various kinds of birds' feathers after treatment, cutting, linking together and pasting. The principal products are bas-relief hanging screens. Then there are big and small woollen carpets and embroidered products. The principal embroidery factory of Lianyungang also accepts processing orders, for instance, it processes Japanese kimonos.

A glass-making industry began to develop here during the 1970's. Major products include vases, ashtrays and leaping fish. The main raw material is quartz produced in the harbour's vicinity. The harbour has rich quartz mineral resources. For example, Donghai county produces fine-quality crystal. Two-thirds of the county's townships have crystal mineral reserves. The county produces 400 tons of crystal annually. During the 1950s local farmers excavated a giant piece of crystal weighing 4,358 kilograms. Fangshan township of the county is endowed with a reserve of natural pomegranate red rubies, so far the largest to date found in the country. The area also has white marble and serpentine.

Lying against mountains and facing the sea, Lianyungang is rich in delicacies from land and sea. Seafood include prawn, sea cucumber, porgy, laver and kelp. The sea cucumber produced in Lianyungang is delicate and tender and has a protein content of 70%. It is the best of all sea cucumbers and makes an excellent dish at Chinese banquets. The laver of Lianyungang was cited in books produced during the Ming Dynasty. Early in the Tang and Song Dynasties it was a tributary object to the royal court. Kelp is now cultivated on a large scale in the harbour and its adjacent sea water.

The beverages Lianyungang produces include the Cloud and Fog Tea and three kinds of wine — white grape wine, haw wine and tomato wine. So far Lianyungang is the sole producer of tomato wine in all of China.

Many people who have port related jobs live in this area and have a convenient commute.



All manner of transport is available in Lianyungang, including pedicabs.



Three "Long-Standing Shops" of Lianyungang

Lianyungang harbour has but a short history and is a city of moderate scale, however it has a number of old shops of particular interest. The oldest among them are the Shengqinggong Tea Shop, the Sanhexing Herbal Medicine Shop and the Xinxiang Sauce and Pickle Shop. They are honoured as the three "long-standing shops."

The Shengqinggong Tea Shop was set up in 1919. Its owner was Zhang Zhixuan, originally from Jixian County, Hebei Province. At the beginning Zhang had to draw support from Shen Yunpei, a local large property owner whose shops all began with the word "Sheng"; thus, Zhang's tea shop was called Shengqinggong.

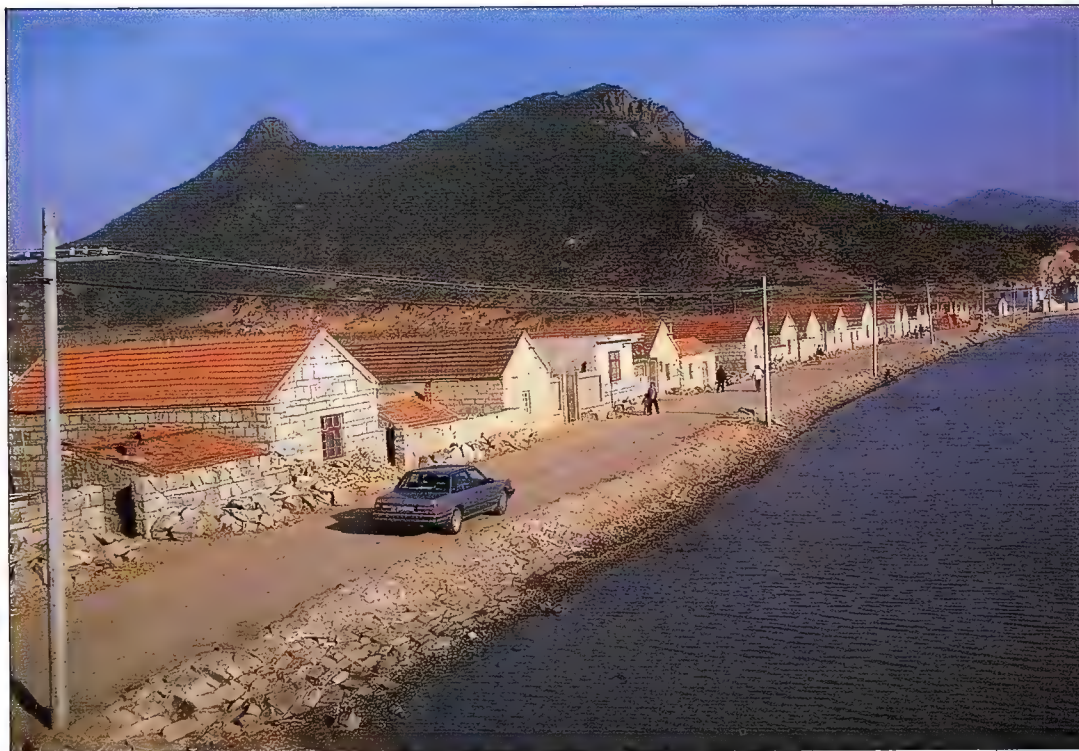
Zhang's shop started on a humble scale employing only several shop assistants. Teas were purchased directly from tea growers and processed at the shop. The cost was low. The shop sold four varieties of tea — Maofeng tea, Zhulan scented tea, Longjing or Dragon Well tea and jasmine tea. Customers came from various places and the business became quite prosperous.

The Sanhexing Herbal Medicine Shop was founded in 1923. A Henanese named Kong Zhong'an found that Lianyungang held great prospects as a commercial city with convenient land and sea transportation. He set up the Sanhexing Herbal Medicine Shop at Xinpu, southwest of Lianyungang with an investment of 10,000 silver dollars. The shop sold more than 2,000 kinds of herbal medicine of which 400 kinds were for common use. It became the biggest such store in Lianyungang and its neighbourhood with the most complete stock of herbal medicine available in the area.

The Sanhexing store was meticulous about product packaging. Each kind of medicine was wrapped up in small packages in advance with a direction stating the quality, function, dosage and warnings, with even the producer printed on the wrapping. By putting these small packages together according to prescription a dose of herbal medicine, clean and in accurate quantity, was compounded. Renowned local doctors were invited to the store for treating patients.

The Xinxiang Sauce and Pickle Shop was established in 1924 by Yang Yuting from Tancheng of Shandong Province. At first it was a branch of the Yuanxiangyong Restaurant. To strengthen his position Yang asked a wealthy man of Xinpu to be one of his share-holders and rented his land to build a five-room shop, an accountant's room and a workshop. The two words "Xinxiang" in bold, energetic strokes on the signboard was written by Wang Xu, a calligrapher of Shandong Province on invitation and with a gift of ten taels of silver.

The Xinxiang shop sells over 30 varieties of sauces and pickled fruits and vegetables. Among them, preserved sweet melons stuffed with kernels of peach and apricots and other ingredients, salted eggplants with their thin skins brushed off on bricks and pickled chilli flavoured with crystal sugar are among the most outstanding.



Top and above: In the city's suburbs people are richer and have a beautiful living environments. They are mostly individual entrepreneurs. Their houses built with gneiss stones are rather standard for the area.



Alxa's Camels and Camel Wool

PHOTOS BY CHAPMAN LEE

The Alxa League in the western part of Inner Mongolia, which is made up of the three banners of Ejin, Alxa Left and Alxa Right, occupies a large area that includes three deserts: the Tengger, the Bodain Jaran and the Ulan Buh. The inhabitants of the region are mostly nomads. Their main assets are their camel herds.

The most common species here is the two-humped Bactrian camel. With an estimated population of over 150,000, Alxa's camel herds account for about one-fourth of the globe's camels, and produce more than 600 tonnes of quality camel hair every year.

The Bactrian camel has very strong legs and feet, and features a thick coat with long hair. A fully grown camel weighs an average of four hundred kilograms and is about 1.7 metres tall. It can walk for thirty to forty kilometres a day with a load of two hundred kilograms on its back without needing to stop for food and water.

In the Alxa region, the camels are let free into the desert surrounding the villages during the summer months to wander about and graze. In mid-autumn, when the female camels are about to give birth, the local herdsman go into the desert to herd and reclaim their camels.

Each family has several camels, some with more than two hundred, others with fewer than thirty. A fine camel is worth a price in the range of Rmb ¥800-900, while a poorer one fetches around Rmb ¥400-500.

The camels are, of course, a major means of transportation in the area. In addition to transporting goods through the desert from oasis to oasis, camels are also used for local transport. For routine activities such as going to markets, strolling, visiting relatives, attending wedding festivals and funerals, etc., camels in Alxa are as essential for transit as buses, trains, cars and lorries are elsewhere.

And the camels are more efficient utilizers of resources, for people cannot use the waste products of engines. Camel droppings, however, are collected and used as fuel for cooking and heating houses. Since the desert by its very definition is lacking in firewood and other combustible materials, the natives are glad to utilize this fuel which is free for the scooping. Camel milk is not only imbibed as a nutritious beverage, it is also processed and made into a fermented alcoholic beverage, cheese, butter, yoghurt, and other products for consumption by the locals.

The camels also provide valuable hair for trading which is the major revenue earner for the families. Once winter has passed and the weather warms up, the camels begin to shed their long thick coats. Their hair comes off in loose tufts which are combed off carefully every day by the herdsman. During that time, they cannot bear any weight on their backs and look as if they are about to perish.

According to the villagers, a top quality camel yields three and a half kilograms of hair a year, and a medium quality one about two and a half kilograms. Even a camel with a thin coat



Camel hide also serves as a good material for making shoes and other leather articles.

sheds one and a half to two kilograms of hair every year. The hair from different places on the body is of varied quality which commands different prices. Generally speaking, each camel can produce hair worth Rmb ¥45 each shedding season. The hair from the camel's legs and neck is cheaper than the hair from other parts of the body which is softer and finer. White camel hair is also more expensive than the normal brownish-yellow hair.

More than 2,000 years ago when the Silk Road between the Middle East and Europe and China had been utilized, merchants already transported the camel hair of the region to Europe for commerce. Nowadays, camel hair is generally woven into winter coats, jackets, sweaters, cardigans and duvets. There is a camel hair processing factory located about two kilometres outside Bayan Hot where most of the camel hair from the Alxa League is sent up to be prepared for weaving.



Preserved camel meat in jars is one of the products from Alxa.



In a camel wool mixing room

Camel wool is a high-grade material very suitable for warm clothing as well as quilt waddings.



The prices of various grades of camel hair and yarn are listed below:

1. Combed camel hair (apricot in colour)
 - Class A: Rmb ¥110,000 per ton
 - Class B: Rmb ¥80,000 per ton
 - Class C: Rmb ¥85,000 per ton
2. Bleached white camel hair: Rmb ¥140,000 per ton
3. Camel wool knitting yarn (roving)
 - 16s: Rmb ¥65,000 per ton
 - 18s: Rmb ¥70,000 per ton
 - 20s: Rmb ¥80,000 per ton
 - 22s: Rmb ¥85,000 per ton
4. Pure camel wool knitting yarn (semi-worsted)
 - Above 32s: Rmb ¥250,000 per ton
5. Pure camel wool knitting yarn (semi-worsted)
 - Above 48s: Rmb ¥320,000 per ton
6. White combed camel wool (original colour): Rmb ¥160,000 per ton
7. Common camel hair
 - Class A: Rmb ¥32,000 per ton
 - Class B: Rmb ¥30,000 per ton
 - Class C: Rmb ¥28,000 per ton
8. Camel wool quilt wadding
 - 2ng 1.5 x 2m: Rmb ¥75 each
 - 2.5 ng 1.7 x 2m: Rmb ¥86.9 each
 - 1.5 ng 1.5 x 2m: Rmb ¥53.4 each
9. Camel wool bedtick
 - 0.35-0.45 ng: Rmb ¥16.60-19.50 each
10. Camel wool knitting wear:
 - Rmb ¥58.90-74.50 each
 - Camel wool overcoat: Rmb ¥189 each
 - Camel wool scarf: Rmb ¥17-20 each
11. Camel wool trousers: Rmb ¥65 each

The address of the Alxa Camel Wool Factory is as follows:

Western Suburbs of Bayan Hot
Alxa Left Banner
Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region
Contact telephone: 22393 Cable: 7474
Postcode: 750300

Presently the Alxa League Hotel and the Alxa Left Banner Guest House are the only two hotels in Alxa which accept foreign tourists. They offer a total of thirty rooms and the room facilities include baths, telephones, televisions and other basic facilities. They also serve such traditional Mongolian dishes as Mongolian Barbecue, palm of camel, hump of camel, yoghurt, camel's milk tea and more.

The room rates for the hotel range from Rmb ¥10 to Rmb ¥50 per night.



Hotels in Major Cities Along the Eurasian Transcontinental Railway

Lianyungang

Shenzhou Hotel

神州賓館

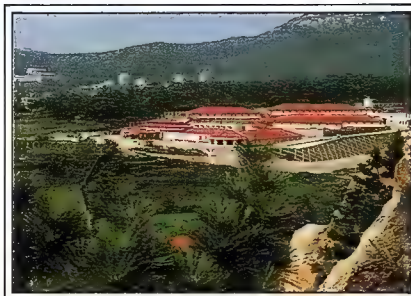


Photo by Zhao Ming

Xugou Beach, Lianyungang, Jiangsu 222042

Tel: 0518-310080 (310088) Telex: 0518-311535

GM: Wang Shuijuan

99 rooms Room rates: Single US\$32, double US\$34, suite US\$65, deluxe suite US\$69 (20% less in slack season)

Located on the slope of Yingzhui Hill facing a bathing beach
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, disco, fitness centre, conference room, billiard room

Tianranju Hotel

天然居賓館

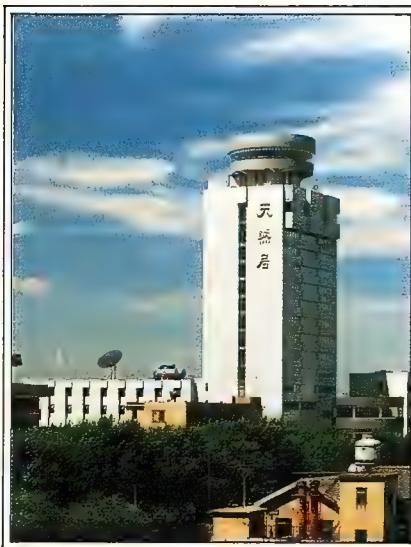


Photo by Zhao Ming

Hailian Rd Central, Xipu, Lianyungang, Jiangsu 222000

Tel: 0518-411688 Fax: 0518-411851

GM: Zhang Jian

88 rooms Room rates: Single US\$45, double US\$52, suite US\$85 (30-50% discount in slack season)

Located in the commercial centre with transport facility
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, banquet hall, Karaoke, business centre, conference hall

Yunhua Guest House

雲華賓館

26 East Hailian Rd., Xipu, Lianyungang, Jiangsu 222001

Yuntai Guest House

雲台賓館

Yunshan Rd, Lianyungang, Jiangsu 222001

Zhengzhou

Huang He Hotel

黃河飯店

Zhongyuan Rd, Zhengzhou, Henan 450052

Tel: 771006 Telex: 46020 Fax: 772235

GM: Zhao Lanting

251 rooms and 10 suites Room rates: double Rmb¥90, triple Rmb¥66, suite Rmb¥140

Located 10km from the airport, 2km from the railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, disco, shopping arcade

International Hotel

國際飯店

Jinshui Rd, Zhengzhou, Henan 450003

Tel: 28875

Zhengzhou Hotel

鄭州飯店

Xinglong Rd, Zhengzhou, Henan 450000

Xi'an

Bell Tower Hotel

鐘樓飯店

Southwest of Bell Tower, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001

Tel: 29201 Telex: 70124 XABTH CN / 70195 BTHCN Fax: (029) 718970 / 718767

GM: Robert Wild

305 rooms and 16 suites Room rates: Double US\$45-65, deluxe suite US\$160, presidential suite US\$320

Located 5km from the airport and the railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, shopping centre, facilities for handicapped persons, baby sitter service

Concord Hotel

協和大酒店

28 East Fenghao Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710077

Tel: 44460, 44828 Telex: 70024 CONHL CN Fax: 742814

GM: Liu Yanhe

161 rooms and 6 suites Room rates: Single FEC¥150, double FEC¥150, suites FEC¥250

Located 10km from the city centre, 2km from the airport, 15km from the railway station

Facilities: Business centre, conference room, shopping centre, facilities for handicapped persons

Golden Flower Hotel

金花飯店

8 West Chang'le Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032

Tel: 332981

Hawaii Hotel

夏威夷酒店

56 East Youyi Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000

Tel: 711288

Holiday Inn Xi'an

神州假日酒店

8 East Huan Cheng Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000

Tel: 721882

Hyatt Xi'an

阿房宮凱悅飯店

Dongda St, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001

Tel: 712020

Jianguo Hotel

建國飯店

South Jinhua Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000

Tel: (86) 29-338888 Fax: (86) 29-335145

Opened 12 March 1989

820 rooms, 22 suites Room rates: Single US\$50-65, double US\$50-65, suite US\$75-300

Located: near the Xingqing Park, Xi'an Zoo and the Banpo Museum, 12km/25mn from the airport, 7km/10mn from the railway station

Facilities: satellite receiving system, business centre, secretarial and translation service, telex/fax/cable



Photo by Wang Miao

service, photocopying, personal computer, heated indoor swimming pool, rental of bicycle and the biggest tourism shopping mall in Xi'an

Jiefang Hotel

解放飯店
Railway Station Square, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710004

Lishan Hotel

驪山賓館
Lintong, Shaanxi 710600

Merchants Hotel

華商酒店
131 Heping Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001
Tel: 718988

New World Dynasty Hotel

古都大酒店
48 Lianhu Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710002
Tel: 716868 Telex: 700215 Fax: 714222
GM: Raymond Yip
483 rooms and 18 suites Room rates: Double US\$80,
superior US\$100, suite: US\$150-300
Located 3km from the city centre, 4km from the airport,
3km from the railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, disco, theatre,
karaoke, baby sitter service, facilities for handicapped
persons

New World Hotel

新世界酒店
5 South Street, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710002
Tel: 719988

Orient Hotel

西安東方大酒店
26 West Xiaozhai Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710061

Qomolangma Hotel

珠穆朗瑪賓館
55 East Youyi Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710054
Tel: 711980, 711986

Scarlet Bird Hotel

朱雀飯店
West Xiaozhai Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000

Shaanxi Guest Hotel

陝西賓館
Zhangbagou, Xi'an, Shaanxi, 710061
Tel: 41813

Shaanxi Sports Hotel

陝西體育賓館
Inside the Shaanxi Sports Stadium, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710068
Tel: 711342

Shuyuan Hotel

書院賓館
East Shuyuan Rd, Lintong, Shaanxi 710600
Tel: 2831

Tang Cheng Hotel

唐城賓館
3 South Lingyuan Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710061
Tel: 711164, 55920, 54171 Telex: 70013 TCH CN Fax: (029)
711041
GM: Li Qikui
395 rooms and 11 suites Room rates: Double US\$39, suite
US\$92, deluxe suite US\$128-170, presidential suite
US\$383
Located 7km from the city centre and the airport, 10km from
the railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, exhibition hall

Victory Hotel

勝利飯店
16 South Huancheng Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710054

Wan Nian Hotel

萬年飯店
11 Changle Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032
Tel: 331932, 332523 Telex: 70033 XWNH CN Fax:
335460
GM: Philip K S Chu
162 rooms and 4 suites Room rates: Double FEC¥150,
superior FEC¥180, suite FEC¥300
Located 6 km from the city centre, 12km from the airport,
5km from the railway station

Xi'an Garden Hotel—Tang Hua

唐華賓館
4 Yanyin Rd, Dayanta, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000
Tel: 711111

Xigongda Guest House

西工大賓館
59 West Youyi Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710068
Tel: 55911

Xi'an Hotel

西安賓館
26 North Chang'an Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710061
Tel: 711351

Xi'an People's Hotel

西安人民大廈
319 Dongxin St, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710004
Tel: 715111 Telex: 70176 RMHTA CN Fax: 718152
GM: Xue Hanjun
458 rooms and 108 suites Room rates: Double
FEC¥85-180, suite FEC¥135-325, deluxe suite
FEC¥650-1350, presidential suite FEC¥1860
Located 8.5km from the airport, 2.5km from the railway
station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, exhibition hall,
baby sitter service, facilities for handicapped persons

Yulan Hotel

榆蘭酒店
40 West Changle Rd, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032

Lanzhou

Friendship Hotel Lanzhou

友誼飯店
14 West Xijin Rd., Lanzhou, Gansu 730050
Tel: 33051

Hongyun Hotel

虹雲賓館
5 Gaolan Rd, Lanzhou, Gansu 730000
Tel: 28311 Cable: 1577
GM: Li Shanmin
84 rooms and 6 suites Room rates: Double FEC¥80, suite
FEC¥120

Located 1km from the city centre, 7.5km from the airport,
2km from the railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, karaoke bar,
disco, shopping centre

Jincheng Hotel

金城賓館
363 Tianshui Avenue, Lanzhou, Gansu 730000
Tel: 27931, 28611 Telex: 72121 BTHJC CN Fax: 418438
GM: Yang Xiaotian
264 rooms and 38 suites Room rates: Double US\$40, suite
US\$60, deluxe suite US\$120
Located 1km from the city centre, 7.5km from the airport,
2km from the railway
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, exhibition hall

Lanhua Guest House

蘭化賓館
Welfare District, Xigu, Lanzhou, Gansu 730060
Tel: 55981

Lanzhou Hotel

蘭州飯店
204 West Donggang Rd, Lanzhou, Gansu 730000
Tel: 28321

Ningwozhuang Hotel

寧臥莊飯店
238 Tianshui Rd, Lanzhou, Gansu 730000
Tel: 26221

Victory Hotel

勝利飯店
127 Zhongshan Rd, Lanzhou, Gansu 730030
Tel: 465221

Zhongchuan Airport Hotel

中川機場酒店
Zhongchuan Airport, Lanzhou, Gansu 730087
Tel: 23415

Urümqi

Friendship Guest House

友誼賓館
North Yan'an Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830001
Tel: 78085

Kunlun Hotel

昆侖酒店
51 North Youhao Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830000
Tel: 42411

Overseas Chinese Hotel

華僑賓館
51 South Xinhua Rd., Urümqi, Xinjiang 830001
Tel: 70530, 77797

Xinjiang Guest House

新疆迎賓館
Yan'an Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830001

Xinjiang Hongshan Hotel

新疆紅山賓館
108 North Xinhua Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830002
Tel: 24232

Xinjiang Hotel

新疆飯店
107 Changjiang Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830000

Xinjiang Sports Guest House

新疆體育賓館
3 Renmin Rd, Urümqi, Xinjiang 830002
Tel: 77978

Stories About Monkeys for the Year of the Monkey



Stamps of these three golden monkeys issued in September 1963 are portrayed in the style of traditional Chinese painting. (Photo by Chan Yat Nin)

According to the traditional Chinese calendar, 1992 is the year of Ren-shen, which is more commonly called the year of the monkey. The image of the monkey occupies a prominent place in Chinese culture. One of the twelve animals denoting years people are born in, the monkey is regarded by the Chinese as an auspicious animal; thus, its image can be found in archaeological finds, classical painting, New Year pictures, toys, operas, carvings, paper-cuts and even in temples. It is on the monkey that people place their hope for happiness and prosperity.

An Auspicious Sign in China

The reason why the monkey is regarded as a lucky sign by the Chinese is perhaps due to the fact that the Chinese character for monkey is a homonym of that for marquis — a title of nobility in ancient times. People undoubtedly hoped to be promoted or installed as feudal lords, consequently the monkey became a sign of auspiciousness, and many cultural images including the monkey were created. An often seen picture commonly referred to as "being installed immediately as a feudal lord", for example, depicts a monkey riding on a horse (on horseback in Chinese is *mashang*, a homonym of immediately); while another one dubbed "being installed as a feudal lord and hanging its seal" portrays a monkey hanging the seal onto a maple tree (in Chinese, maple is a homonym of installation). These motifs are often found in screens and walls of feudal official

buildings, as well as in paintings, stationery and jade carvings.

In the old days, traders with a train of horses carrying goods travelling on the plateau in southwestern China often would take a monkey along with them. The monkey is sensitive to odours caused by the diseases of horses and can help to discover them in time to prevent the spread of pestilence. When the traders put up for the night, they would let the monkey smell the place to protect the horses against any infectious diseases. In the Chinese classical novel *Journey to the West*, the Jade Emperor gave Monkey Sun Wukong the title of Bimawen (which is a homonym describing how the monkey would protect horses against diseases), whose duty was to be in charge of the heavenly horses; thus, the monkey became a sign representing the prevention of infectious diseases.

Everyday Words and Expressions Concerning Monkeys

The Chinese like to use the image of the monkey, that of Monkey Sun Wukong in particular, as a figure of speech to enrich the expressiveness of the language. For instance, a naughty and mischievous boy is often likened to the clever and lively monkey in the saying "cleverer than monkey if with hair"; satire on a miser is "no monkey would part with a date in hand"; and an ugly man is described as having "a monkey-like mouth and cheeks".

Since the publication of *Journey to the West*, the image of Monkey Sun Wukong

has greatly enriched the language with metaphors concerning the monkey. For example, a wide gap is likened to Monkey Sun Wukong's somersault, as he can cover 108,000 *li* (54,000 kilometres) in one somersault. To satirize an arrogant and conceited man, people say he is "Monkey Sun Wukong entitled Bimawen", because, according to the story, when Sun Wukong takes up the post, he thinks it is a high office but in reality is only an undeserved post and is complacent about it. "The White-Bone Demon confronting Monkey Sun Wukong" means to strip the mask off of a person or a thing in disguise. This allusion originates in the episode from the same novel where the White-Bone Demon successively disguises herself as a country lass, her mother and her father, to deceive Tripitaka, but only our hero Monkey sees through her ruse. "The Six Eared Monkey pretending to be Monkey Sun Wukong" is a description which refers to mixing the spurious with the genuine. In this part of the story the Six-Eared Monkey passes himself off as Monkey Sun Wukong without being detected. Proficiency is compared to "Monkey Sun Wukong's golden cudgel" — his powerful all purpose tool which can turn into a huge pillar or a sewing needle, or whatever else is needed. "Monkey turning into a temple of the mountain deity" illustrates that a flaw in a thing is finally spotted. The story surrounding this goes that being chased by the deity Erlang, Monkey Sun Wukong turns into a temple of the mountain deity to avoid capture. Unable to think of a better form for his tail to take, he hastily turns it into a flag-pole behind the temple. This is perceived as rather odd and he is immediately recognized by Erlang. And the saying "Monkey Sun Wukong can never get out of the Buddha's palm" is used to describe such a situation in which a person cannot extricate themselves from other people's control. It is derived from the following story: in order to tame Monkey Sun Wukong, the Buddha spreads his palm and promises to set Monkey free provided that he can jump out of the palm. After countless somersaults, Monkey thinks he has gone to the end of Heaven with five towering pillars in front, and comes back only to discover that the pillars are nothing but the Buddha's fingers.

Monkey Revues

In the past, on the occasion of the lunar New Year or other festivals, and during slack seasons in farming, monkey performance artists would tour the cities. Such performing groups usually consisted of two men, one leading a goat or a dog, the other carrying on his back a small wooden box, on top of which squatted a monkey dressed in a short gown. When walking, they would beat a gong to solicit

viewers, and stop upon arrival at a vacant place. After driving a stake into the ground, the monkey show started with the sound of the gong.

At the beginning of the revue the monkey turned several somersaults and performed handstands. Then, in accordance with the changing gong beats and the different shows, the monkey would keep changing its masks and helmets. The monkey sometimes acted as a civil official, other times as a military officer, still yet other times as a nobleman. At last the artist would begin to sing: "I fear no officials but the devil incarnated in the *yamen* (government office in imperial China)." Taking this as his cue, the monkey would then put on a hat resembling that worn by a Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) bailiff, gnash its teeth and stare at the audience in anger, which was a vivid image recalling a bully lackey in a local government office during olden times.

When the artist finished the dramatic part of the presentation, he would hitch up the goat to a small cart and then the monkey would jump onto the cart and drive the goat cart round. The monkey often executed somersaults or handstands on the back of the goat, which amused the viewers, who would throw in coins to reward the artists and their monkey for the performance.

Today in the Ditan Temple Fair in Beijing, people can see a monkey circus with monkeys doing handstands and riding on goatback, similar to the performances of yesteryear.

White Cloud Temple

Situated outside Xibianmen in Beijing, the Baiyun (White Cloud) Temple is a Taoist temple. But nowadays more tourists than Taoists visit the temple. These tourists come for two special purposes: one is to go to throw coins into the small hole under the White Stone Bridge, believing that a coin thrown into the hole would ensure them one year's good luck; another is to touch the stone monkey carved on the wall on the right side of the gate at the temple. An old superstition has it that touching the stone monkey would rid one of worry and touching a certain part of the stone monkey's body corresponding to the diseased part of your body would cure your disease. Small wonder the stone monkey has turned shiny pitch-black owing to countless caresses by those who believe or do not believe in the tale, by those who want to be cured and those who just want to seek luck.

Beijing's Folk Handicrafts Depicting Monkeys

Many folk handicrafts in Beijing have the monkey as their motif. In the temple fair, there are clay sculptures of Monkey

Sun Wukong in the form of a Beijing Opera mask, which exaggerate the opera facial make-up, and make eye-catching ornaments on the wall.

Another handicraft taking the monkey as its central theme, which can be found in the temple fair, is the clay sculpture by artist Zhang Baolin. His work depicts the scene of Tripitaka and his three disciples going on a pilgrimage to the West with Monkey taking the lead. Sun Wukong's bravery and incisive insight is vividly embodied in this sculpture.

There is still another handicraft concerning the monkey — playthings of monkeys in a ten by seven centimetres glass box. The playthings, several centimetres in height, are remarkably true-to-life images of monkeys in different postures and with different facial expressions. They are made of three kinds of Chinese herbal medicines glued together. The legend goes that during the Qing Dynasty, two young assistants of a Chinese pharmacy, who were often bullied by the accountant, made a half-man-half-monkey plaything by gluing together three herb medicines to mock the accountant. Later such compositions gradually developed into an art form.

Bristle figures are a form of folk handicraft unique to Beijing. They incorporate the artistic skills of opera facial make-up, clay sculpture and painting. The work of these figures often takes the opera stories as their theme. When put in a copper plate, which is pounded with a wooden hammer, these opera figures, with bristle at the bottom, can spin and execute actions such as swordplay and spearplay. Two or three figures put together can perform a mini play. Monkey Sun Wukong always is cast in the leading role, surrounded by a group of little monkeys. The monkeys turn round on the plate accompanied by sound of the copper plate, which recreates a lively scene in the Mountain of Flower and Fruit, where Sun Wukong lived at the beginning of the story. Another interesting mechanical play is "Monkey Sun Wukong Subdues the White-Bone Demon".

Tours to Habitats of Monkeys

The following information is for the benefit of readers interested in viewing large numbers of monkeys.

Monkey Kingdom in Hainan

In Lingshui County, which is situated along the southeastern coast of Hainan Island, there is a peninsula — the Nanwan Peninsula. Seven kilometres in length and 1.5 kilometres in width, the peninsula is full of huge jagged rocks and bushes. It is a kingdom of rhesus monkeys and is called the Nanwan Monkey Island Tourist

Spot. This place is in fact an area at the tip of a peninsula, which is at the foot of a hill 250 metres above sea level. In front of the hill there is a huge statue of a mother monkey tending her child. There is an empty space at the foot of the hill for visitors to watch and feed the monkeys.

The Monkey Island occupies nearly 1,000 hectares. It is said that the rhesus monkey can detect a poisonous snake 30 metres away and will jump onto the shoulder of its master, screaming to give the alarm. Unfortunately, the monkeys in this area seriously harmed the crops and as a result, the farmers of the locality used to raise dogs to protect the crops and wantonly catch and kill the monkeys. In 1965 when these monkeys were on the verge of extinction, China's first rhesus monkey preservation area was set up here to curb the hunting of monkeys. Consequently, the monkeys have survived and their population has multiplied from 60 to more than 600.

According to the staff of the preservation area, these monkeys are divided into 15 troops, each having 50 to 60 monkeys. The social behaviour of the monkeys within each group is fascinating. In each troop there are anywhere from one to four monkeys acting as kings — a king and his deputies. The heat period of female monkeys falls between late October and February next year. This marks the time for male monkeys to compete for the "throne". They fight each other and the winner becomes the new king and all the female monkeys are his imperial concubines after a fashion. After a six-month gestation period, a female monkey gives birth to her baby, usually one baby at a litter and in some cases two litters in three years. The aged and defeated kings live a lonely life in their later years. Some reigning monkey kings are very fierce and even try to deprive the ousted leaders of their food. When this happens, the human staff would scold the reigning king and feed the ex-king. The behaviour of the monkeys in obtaining their food can be downright annoying. Very often, a group of 30 to 40 monkeys run out and jump down from the hill, the trees, grass and rocks to brazenly solicit the tourists for food. Among these monkeys, about 100 are relatively obedient. When they hear the whistles of the keepers between 8 and 11 a.m. and 3 and 5 p.m., they bound downhill beside the Monkey Watching Pavilion to have meals.

Yunmeng Monkey Island

The Yunmeng Monkey Island in the Qiandao Lake in Zhejiang Province is the first artificial monkey reserve in China. It was jointly set up in 1985 by the Shanghai Institute of Physiology under the Chinese Academy of Science, and the Pailing Tree Farm in Chun'an County, Zhejiang. Since

that time troops of rhesus monkeys have been moved from Guangxi to this island and the number has increased from 80 to 300. Owing to the favourable ecological environment of the island and the friendly climate in the Qiandao Lake area, the survival rate of baby monkeys is as high as 100%.

Tourists can be ferried to the island in boats. If tourists throw food onto the ground, monkeys will come out to get the food. They put as much food as possible into their mouths and store the food in their cheek pouches, which would be removed into the mouths later for ingestion at their leisure.

Monkey Reserve in Taihang Mountains

In the Taihang Mountains, there is a monkey preservation area to be found at the Wulongkou Scenic Spot in Jiyuan City, Henan Province. Set up in 1982, the area features 19 troops of monkeys alto-



This young golden monkey on a stamp issued in Gengshen Year (1980, the Year of the Monkey) is a reproduction of a woodblock work. (Photo by Chan Yat Nin)

gether totalling more than 2,000 animals. As soon as one enters the feeding point at the northern hillside of the Wulonggou Gully, three huge iron cages come into sight. These cages, five metres in length, four metres in width and three metres in height, are labled from east to west respectively the standard cage for scientific raising, the cage for parent-and-child-monkeys, and the cage for free movement. Behind the cages lie the mountain slope and forest. When the keeper blows his whistle, several dozens of monkeys come streaking down from the woods and cliffs to gather round the keeper, waiting for their meals. The keeper provides each tourist with fodder for his own amusement to feed the monkeys.

At the feeding point there are five monkeys specially trained to amuse tourists. These monkeys salute tourists, act as companions for tourists while they

take pictures, perform somersaults, climb up the post to stand sentry and more.

It is said that around February every year, the monkey king chooses a strong and healthy young monkey to be thrown down the cliff as a sacrificial offering to the mountain deity to pray for his blessing of safety and happiness of all monkeys in the coming year. Perhaps the unfortunate animal is viewed as a potential rival or more likely a loser in a courtship battle. Even if the young monkey survives, it becomes a solitary monkey, an outcast, it dare not and actually can never join in the troop again.

The Monkey Tribes of Mount Emei

The number of monkeys living in Mount Emei was estimated in 1988 at about 400 divided into eight different organizations, which live respectively round the area of Hongchunping, Xianfengsi, Xixiangci and Jiulongdong. With 40 to 50 monkeys, each troop has a strong male monkey as its king and some young and strong ones as praetorian guards after a fashion. They haunt the precipices and adjacent forests. Sometimes they even boldly station themselves in the middle of the mountain paths to stop tourists for food.

In recent years, the local departments concerned have allocated enough feed (such as maize) for feeding the monkeys at fixed hours and at fixed places. Consequently, the monkeys multiply very quickly. Now those monkeys that often go to temples to do imitations of bowing and kowtowing from worshippers will run out to snatch food at the call of the monks. Tourists are advised never to pretend to fight the monkeys nor to hug baby monkeys to tease them, otherwise they would be attacked by the monkey king and the mother monkeys. The monkey, like virtually all animals, innately bullies the weak and fears the strong. Under normal conditions, the monkey is afraid of people. But if the tourist shows signs of fear when the monkey becomes aggressive, the monkey will attack more boldly and other monkeys will join in the assault which may result in the tourist being seriously bitten. According to animal behavioural research fellows, the best way to prevent being bitten by monkeys is to refrain from doting on them and to walk acting fearlessly. In case of provocation from the monkey, when the monkey gets one step ahead, you should walk two steps towards it and the monkey will defer to your advance. In a word, every tourist should observe the rules and never throw food to the monkeys, so as to help put an end to the harmful habits of the monkeys in this area.

Tame Monkeys in Anhui

Situated on the Huaibei Plain in north-west Anhui Province, Lixin County is a famous site of tamed monkeys in China. The business of monkey taming is brisk here and there and many villages specialize in the activity, among which Liufengzhuang is the most well known. This village has fifty households, each of which raises some monkeys varying from half a dozen to several dozens. Performing monkey road shows around the country is an important source of the annual income of the family.

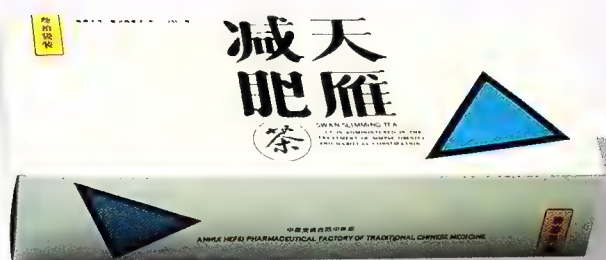
As soon as one enters the village, he can see a monkey tied to the door of every house. These monkey doorkeepers usually have been trained and fear no strangers. Some even beckon you near and then proceed to search your handbag or pockets for food. If they find something to eat, they will give you a smile as well as a salute, and then enjoy the food as if there was no one else present. If the monkey detects any sign of ill intentions from the visitor, it will fearlessly seize and bite the visitor and scream to alert its master.

It is quite an entertaining experience if you are invited to the home of a good hand at monkey taming. Before supper, when you point to your mouth, the monkey immediately places the bowl and chopsticks in front of you; seeing you lift the glass the monkey fills the glass with wine without spilling a single drop; after supper, when you put your hands behind the back of your head, the monkey runs to make the bed and then gestures for you to go to bed.

The villagers train monkeys in accordance with the individual animal's aptitude, rewarding the diligent and punishing the lazy. They rouse the monkeys early in the morning to practise and make them strengthen the memory late at night. After more than one month's repeated practice, the monkeys can perform kowtow, put on caps, salute and carry objects on request. In addition, new types of performance have been developed. For instance, monkeys can put on local operas — wearing different masks and playing to vocal accompaniment. Monkeys can also dance to music.

Walking round the streets in Lixin County, one can often see monkeys, some strolling while others raise their heads and look around. Sometimes what looks like a squatting monkey can be seen on top of a stone pillar in front of a shop. And only when you come nearer to have a close look can you find out that it is not a statue but actually a live monkey, which jumps down the pillar and runs into the shop.

Translated by Chen Jiaji



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92旅遊黃金年主要飯店、客房優惠價

A List of Major Hotels and Restaurants in Beijing

Favorable Room Rates Offered by Major Hotels of Beijing in 1992, the Golden Year of Tourism

飯店名稱 Hotel	星級 Stars	標準間原價 Standard Room Rate	92年各月標準間優惠價 Preferential Rates in 1992		
			5,6,9,10,11	4,7,8	1,2,3,12
王府飯店 The Palace Hotel	★★★★★	180	162	135	108
北京貴賓樓飯店 Grand Hotel Beijing	★★★★★	150	135	113	90
中國大飯店 China World Hotel	★★★★★	150	135	113	90
香格里拉飯店 Shangri-La Hotel	★★★★★	150	135	113	90
長城飯店 The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing	★★★★★	120	99	80	60
北京飯店 Beijing Hotel	★★★★★	113	90	75	60
長富宮飯店 Hotel New Otani Chang Fu Gong	★★★★★	110	99	83	66
京廣中心 Jing Guang Centre	★★★★★	110	99	83	66
崑崙飯店 Kunlun Hotel	★★★★★	110	99	83	66
新大都飯店 Xin Da Du Hotel	★★★★	120	98	80	60
建國飯店 Jianguo Hotel	★★★★	115	104	86	69
首都賓館 Capital Hotel	★★★★	110	99	83	66
國際飯店 International Hotel	★★★★	110	99	83	66
京倫飯店 Hotel Beijing-Toronto	★★★★	100	90	75	60
麗都飯店 Holiday Inn, Lido Beijing	★★★★	100	90	75	60
和平賓館 Peace Hotel	★★★★	98	88	74	55
五洲大酒店 Continental Grand Hotel	★★★★	80	72	60	48
香山飯店 Fragrant Hill Hotel	★★★★	60	54	45	36
友誼賓館貴賓樓 Grand Tower, Friendship Hotel	★★★★	60	55	50	45
國貿飯店 Traders Hotel	★★★	100	90	75	60
燕山大酒店 Yanshan Hotel	★★★	90	80	70	50
奧林匹克飯店 Olympic Hotel	★★★	90	81	68	54
金都假日飯店 Holiday Inn Downtown	★★★	88	79	66	53
臺灣飯店 Taiwan Hotel	★★★	80	72	60	48
梅地亞飯店 Media Hotel	★★★	80	72	60	48
新世界飯店 New World Hotel	★★★	80	72	60	48
龍泉賓館 Dragon Spring Hotel	★★★	80	72	60	48
天橋賓館 Rainbow Hotel	★★★	65	59	49	39
西苑飯店 Xiyuan Hotel	★★★	60	54	45	36
展覽館賓館 Beijing Exhibition Center Hotel	★★★	60	54	45	36

飯店名稱 Hotel	星級 Stars	標準間原價 Standard Room Rate	92年各月標準間優惠價 Preferential Rates in 1992		
			5,6,9,10,11	4,7,8	1,2,3,12
新橋飯店 Xingqiao Hotel	★★★	60	45	40	35
亮馬河大廈 Landmark Towers	★★★	60	55	45	35
園山大酒店 Grand Hotel	★★★	60	54	45	35
燕翔飯店 Yanxiang Hotel	★★★	52	47	39	31
友誼賓館 Friendship Hotel	★★★	50	45	40	35
東方飯店 Dongfang Hotel	★★★	45	40	35	30
民族飯店 Minzu Hotel	★★★	44	40	35	30
前門飯店 Qianmen Hotel	★★★	44	40	33	26
華都飯店 Huadu Hotel	★★★	44	40	33	26
百樂酒店 The Park Hotel	★★★	44	40	33	26
二十一世紀飯店 21st Century Hotel	★★★	42	38	32	25
燕京飯店 Yanjing Hotel	★★★	41	37	31	25
光明飯店 Guangming Hotel	★★★	40	36	30	24
裕龍大酒店 Yu Long Hotel	★★★	37	32	27	16
迴龍觀飯店 Huilongguan Hotel	★★★	20	18	15	12
華僑飯店 Overseas Chinese Hotel	★★	46	38	33	26
日壇賓館 Ritan Hotel	★★	31	28	23	19
光華飯店 Guanghua Hotel	★★	30	27	24	21
北緯飯店 Beiwei Hotel	★★	28	25	22	20
哈德門飯店 Hademen Hotel	★★	25	23	20	18
德勝飯店 Desheng Hotel	★★	24	22	18	14
上園飯店 Shangyuan Hotel	★★	18	16	14	11
亞洲大酒店 Ramada Asia Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	120	108	90	72
天倫王朝飯店 Tianlun Dynasty Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	120	108	90	72
天平利園大酒店 Tianping Lee	未評定 Ungraded	110	99	80	60
港澳中心 Hong Kong Macao Center	未評定 Ungraded	110	99	83	66
新萬壽賓館 Grace Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	75	68	68	45
中苑賓館 Zhongyuan Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	75	68	56	45
兆龍飯店 Zhaolong Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	70	63	53	42
天壇飯店 Tiantan Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	60	55	45	35
永安公寓 Yongan Apartment Hotel	未評定 Ungraded	55	50	41	33

* 團隊價格可再優惠至少10%

* 單位: USD

* All tourist groups enjoy at least 10% discount over the favorable rates listed above.

* Unit: USD

Shantou Opens Up

Tony Henderson

It was early in the morning and the grey sweep of sea before me hardly rippled. Nearby, the yellow rises of eroded dunes and rock caught first light of day. Overhead there was an overcast sky. Close to shore fishing boats reeled, with engines throbbing and nets slung between boats that worked in pairs, the men on board bobbing in and out of sight. Gulls glided above and the long wake of our Hong Kong cruise ship swirled mud from the shallow bottom of the South China Sea off these approaches to Shantou (Swatow).

The sights at once surprised me yet at the same time reassured me. It was easy to exclaim, "Yes, this is China," either as a newcomer, or as an old China hand basking in the rosy glow of dearly held memories.

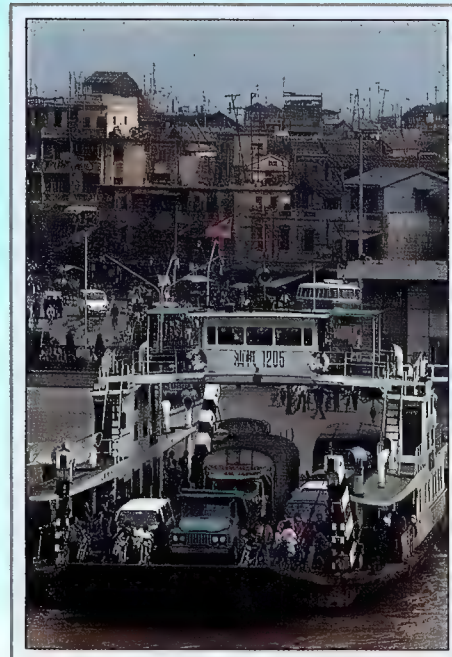
Junks with tattered sails took the slight wind and tacked thither and round, pulling at the tufts of breeze, as they have done for centuries along the China coast. These vessels were of different sizes, some with dark coloured sails of buff or red, with angled patches and vertical contours of cloth.

Such sights have for a long time attracted many a sailor's gaze in this delta of the Hanjiang River in northeastern Guangdong Province. Leading inland are a maze of canals, creeks and waterways, long the essential arteries affording transportation and communication in this area. These water passages take the inbound voyager to the eastern parts of the province and Hakka country. Shantou is the southernmost port located at the very mouth of the Hanjiang. The area is renowned for its fishing, agriculture, crafts and trade.

The main waterway inland leads to the old town of Chaozhou (Chaochow) about twenty miles upstream from whence the river's gradient steepens considerably, allowing only flat bottomed boats to further advance to the Fujian provincial border and beyond.

But all this is far removed from the reach of the modern liner. We steamed past climbs of sea rock with their fishing nets suspended from bamboo poles and marine police motorboats chugging between the moored merchantmen as well as the ever present grimy tugs.

A signal to slow down was clicking on the telegraph as we neared the crowded cross-river ferry carrying its load of cycle-clutching workers, uniformed soldiers, labourers with handcarts and those snorting bull-nosed trucks with discarded engine covers. Soon we pulled alongside the wharf and a milling crowd of dockies gathered to catch ropes, tie hawsers and lower gang-plank-steps for the officials to board and carry out immigration inspection and quarantine operations.



As one of the major seaports in Guangdong Province, Shantou depends much on water transport.

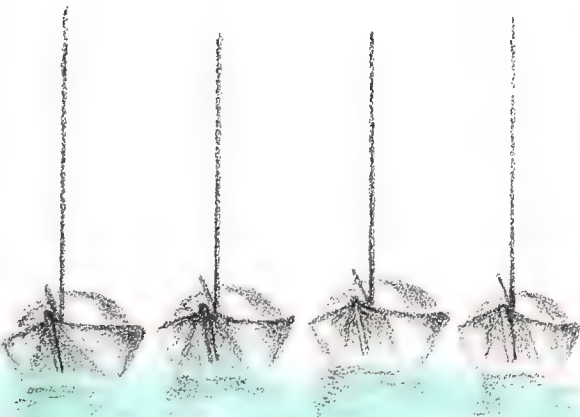
All the passengers gazed outwards over the town, excited by their individual prospects; one returning after a forty-year absence, another seeing his father's home town for the first time in his twenty-five years of earthly existence, a girl returning to visit parents that had been left behind after a marriage to a Hong Kong resident. And, not a few who came to visit China-the-new.

As for Shantou, the place that had attracted them, about nine million souls reside in the city and the surrounding districts. The sub-tropical maritime climate provides fair weather most of the year, and makes for a fine growing area for fruits with oranges, tangerines, pineapples, litchis and bananas most common. Many vegetables, from cabbage to onions and garlic are raised for export besides local fare. Nature has also endowed the area with minerals such as kaolin, granite and glass-sand and non-ferrous metals. Meanwhile, the search still continues for oil.

Rocky outcrops and tiered hills bring to mind sights of classical pictorial China as depicted in landscapes of yore and offer solace to the eyes. There are beaches, islets and spas throughout the area. The abundant mud flats attract all kinds of marine life, like prawns and their predators, the dainty wader.

A Legacy of Travel and Commerce

Yet, many of Shantou's old residents left these shores as long ago as the sixteenth century, not only to points nearby but to further destinations throughout Southeast Asia and later, with eventual settlement, to Hong Kong and Macau. Enough of these



have achieved personal wealth and eminence to return and share what they have earned with their stay-at-home kin. Li Ka-shing, Chairman of the Hutchison Whampoa Group Limited, a large Hong Kong hong for instance, had a fine hospital built, in Chenghai, not far from the city. There's a hotel named in honor of such overseas Chinese as an aggregate as well as various associations and their buildings.

Today Shantou is an open city in the proximity of a Special Economic Zone. It lies 179 nautical miles from Hong Kong, 295 knots from Guangzhou. The nearest port up the coast is Xiamen, 131 miles by sea. Shantou's importance today has been overshadowed because of infrastructural changes such as strategic rail links located elsewhere and because of the dominance of Shanghai and Guangzhou that took goods away from the industrial powerhouse of Guangdong along other routes. Shantou, however, is coming back into favour for the import and export and the distribution of goods to eastern Guangdong, southern Jiangxi, and western Fujian.

Hong Kong construction magnate Gordon Wu, the Managing Director of Hopewell Holdings, has big plans for a deep water port that is hoped will increase ship routing to this area. Also, a long bridge spanning the Hanjiang River will enable highways to be linked up, completing the infrastructure to make Shantou a most competitive city and port. At present, freighters visit Shantou from all over the world, but not with any great frequency. Passenger liners also call, journeying to and from Singapore and Malaysia, in addition to Guangzhou and Haikou in other parts of China. Passenger bus services run daily to Hong Kong, as do lorries carrying goods and the airport has a schedule for services to Guangzhou.

Handicrafts Reflect Tradition

Shantou is renowned for its drawn needlework, textiles beautified with lacelike designs made by pulling out threads with crafted care based on a traditional craft developed over centuries in the home where mothers passed down the techniques in-

volved to their daughters. Embroidery, too, is of good repute.

Down by the river banks, amidst a sparse setting of trees that cannot cope with the dust generated in the summer heat, is the District Arts & Crafts Service. In this multi-floored building are examples of local crafts such as table-cloths, bed spreads, doilies and sofa sets; also embroidered clothing, padded coats and waist coats, crotch-made blouses, Chinese gowns and childrens' cotton padded winter clothes that make the little ones into warm bundles of life with a roly-poly look.

Bamboo is fashioned into various articles for use in the home. Bead curtains, tables and hanging screens are also on display here alongside rattan furniture, cork bags, plaited trays and a multitude of baskets in a variety of weaves. Buddhas carved from wood garnished in gold, jade jewellery and even jade-stone dinner sets and tea drinking utensils, carved figures, ceramic vases, pottery items, fine porcelain pieces, precious stones such as agate in many ornamental styles are some of the many interesting products available here.



A variety of boats can be seen in Shantou.

Attractive paintings in Chinese style, with poems inscribed to the side, are among the many pieces of art here which can be bought at this emporium. What also can be found here are pictures comprised of shells, feather pictures, wheat straw pictures, scroll paintings on bamboo, on rattan and even pictures painted on the inside of vases in a form of esoteric ingenuity. Pictures on stone plates, miniatures painted on eggshells, paper-cuttings and artificial flowers looking freshly picked can be seen. Toys of many kinds, metalwork objets d'art in bronze, copper, silver and cheap aluminium and locally painted porcelain and

lacquerware all showed a penchant for deft handiwork.

Changes in the Wind

As Shantou abuts an Special Economic Zone, investment has been coming in from abroad with a rush at first, followed by a fall. Now investment is quietly steady. So far a carpet factory, a furniture factory and a seed mill are among the start-ups, and it is expected that up to 50 such factories will be operating in this Longhu district after a few years. There is a difference between Longhu's plan to develop operations and those of the other two SEZs that have multi-lateral developments ranging from tourism to property management whereas Longhu will be a more restricted development, with an emphasis on food processing and transportation. There is a 1,000 acre area earmarked as farmland because Shantou has a long-established agricultural sector and a good climate for growing. Planners expect to see orchards, vegetable farms, fish farms and poultry farms, in small to medium-sized investments that suit the locality's requirements.

Free enterprise can be seen on the Shantou street in a thousand and one shops and stalls and among the people who busily engage themselves in their daily tasks. There are goods in the shops, a wealth of Chinese goods from near and far, and jobs to be had. Here, the nation seems to be on the move, and everyone wants to take part. Small-scale construction is going on everywhere, canals and riverbanks are having embankments strengthened, farmers can be seen tilling home plots with care, and festive days not only are returning to the calendar but also being celebrated. Roadside restaurants' customers are increasing as the money-go-round gets into its swing.

Walking on the streets observing the people there is a feeling of something good starting up, and the stage appears to be set for a resurgence of the new. Meanwhile, the sights and sounds of old China are everywhere to be seen, from the traditional handicrafts in side street workshops to the portrait painter who does copies of photos that better any copy machine.

The old folks delight in the children, carrying them to and fro, while the young parents shoulder the wheel. People save for a new bike, a cassette player from Hong Kong and, yes, a colour television set from Japan. Modern trappings are caught in an ancient frame, scenes of daily life from a less hectic time. There can be no hurrying the old folks, yet, there is a new direction and the jean-clad youth follow it — swinging to a different rhythm that calls from a far distant shore, a harbinger of the changes that loom ahead.



Local products in Shantou include all type of bamboo.

The Greater Area of Lianyungang

Yuntai Mountain Located to the northeast of Lianyungang, the mountain is known for its fascinating terrain fashioned by curiously shaped rocks and 136 peaks. The peak called Yunü (Young Maiden), rising to an elevation of 625 metres, is the highest. Temples and monasteries have been constructed on the mountain which date back to over 1,000 years.

Huaguo Mountain Lying fifteen kilometres southeast of Lianyungang, the mountain features temples from virtually all dynasties after the Tang. The 1,300-year-old San-yuan Temple stands here at an altitude of about 400 metres. The mountain is the setting of many episodes from the novel *Journey to the West*.

The Ayuwang Pagoda at the Haiqing Monastery Found at the foot of Huaguo Mountain, the pagoda was erected in 1026, and towers 40 metres and has eight storeys. It is the oldest stone pagoda and the highest religious structure in northern Jiangsu.

The Stone Sea Waves at Donglei Located at the southeastern foot of Huaguo Mountain, it is formed by three immense boulders which resemble waves of the sea, hence the name.

Mount Kongwang Two kilometres south of Lianyungang with an elevation of 129 metres is Mount Kongwang. It features cliff

carvings of the Eastern Han Dynasty depicting Buddhist themes. The carving area measures 15.6 metres from east to west, 9.7 metres high with 108 figures, the biggest being 1.54 metres, and the smallest only 10 centimetres. These are the oldest examples of Buddhist art in China found to date.

Shipeng Mountain This site is located three kilometres to the south of Kongwang Mountain. A huge rock standing shelters other rocks, hence the name Shipeng (Stone Shed). Shipeng Mountain's principal attraction is that it has rock formations which call to mind animals. For example, in one area the stones resemble a duel between a rhinoceros and an elephant. Another one depicts a dolphin enraptured by the moon.

Picturesque sites of Sucheng This locality is southeast of Lianyungang about fifteen kilometres from the port. Surrounded on three sides by mountains it faces the sea. In the mountains one finds many springs, waterfalls, ancient trees and grotesque peaks.

Hot Springs at Donghai Located about fifteen kilometres south of Donghai the springs are on the slope of Yushan (Feather Mountain). The waters of the hot springs here are clear and rich in sodium, magnesium, calcium and other minerals, and bathing in them can be beneficial for a wide range of ailments.

Mount Jinping Paintings of the Dongyi people who resided in this area during the second millennium B.C. can be found here. There are three groups of paintings and three granite rocks on a slight slope which is believed to have been a place of sacrifice for the Dongyi.

Lianyungang Nestled among the mountains and facing the sea, it has a temperate climate. Near the outlying town of Xugou are pleasant beaches and parks. The best time to enjoy the sites of Lianyungang is during the summer and autumn.

Scenic Landscapes on the Loess Plateau

The Loess Plateau, located in North China, is bounded by the Qilian Mountains in the west, the Taihang Mountains in the east, the Great Wall in the north and the Qinling Mountains in the south, covering an area of 600,000 square kilometres. Seventy per cent of the total area is covered with a layer of loess and hence the name Loess Plateau.

Loess is a special soil with fine grains consisting of a mixture of clay, sand and organic matter. Its adhesive texture is clearly seen. When dry, it seems rock solid forming steep precipices; but upon contact with water, the soil seems to dissolve.

How did the loess on the plateau get there? From the geological structures the geographers have discovered that the topography here has undergone great changes. Over one hundred million years ago, the area marking today's loess plateau was crisscrossed with mountain ranges featuring high peaks, deep gullies and basins as well. The Yellow River and other rivers flowing through the basins and gullies bounded by mountains once had crystal-clear water. Somewhat later, about 100 million years ago during the late Tertiary Period the monsoon system was formed on the continent of Asia and during spring and winter every year dry northeast winds blew in from Asia Minor and the Mongolian Plateau which brought southeast the tiny and light powdery yellow loamy soil. The wind, blocked on its way by the Qinling Mountains, then deposited the yellow soil here. This continuous deposition through millions of years has covered the vast area known as the Loess Plateau.

Owing to the various underlying topographical features of the Loess Plateau, the





The mule is an essential means of transportation on the Loess Plateau, even to this Shaanxi wedding procession (by Wang Miao).

yellow soil deposited here varies in depth, with an average thickness of 50 to 80 metres. The layer of thickness exceeds 100 metres in many places. The loess is loose and the rainstorms in summer cause serious soil erosion, which has carved thousands of gullies into the Loess Plateau. Between the gullies there are ridges and knolls, which are about 100 metres above the bottom of neighbouring gullies. If you take a tour to the plateau in winter and look around at a high elevation, you will see a majestic view of the ridges and hills on the vast highlands.

The Loess Plateau boasts beautiful natural landscapes. The Hukou Waterfall on the Yellow River, as mentioned in a previous article, rushes down along the gorges between Shanxi and Shaanxi and flanked by the Lüliang Mountain narrows down on a rocky bed from 250 to 50 metres in width. Narrowing abruptly here, the river waters fall down from a height over ten metres high, sending up myriads of sprays and thunderous roars. In the low-water season in late autumn, the waterfall, which has a descent of some twenty metres, looks magnificent with the waters spraying down, but in the high-water season in summer, the drop is not so high.

The Longmen Gorge, located 40 kilometres away at the lower reaches of the Hukou Waterfall, presents another majestic view. Sandwiched between the Longmen Mountain on the east bank and the Lüliang Mountain on the west bank, the waters burst into rapid torrents in a steep gorge 100 metres wide, sending up sprays upon the rocks in their way.

Rushing out of the Longmen Gorge, the river is joined by the Weihe River and then

flows east to the Sanmen Gorge at a distance of over 100 kilometres away. Flanked by steep and rocky cliffs and blocked by two rock islets in the middle of the river, the waters are cut into three rushing flows. Standing solitary in front of the two islets is a huge column-like rock known as the "Pillar in Mid-Stream". Standing firm against the torrents, the rock has withstood huge waves and the pounding of rapids without being flooded over, carried away or eroded.

The Loess Plateau is crisscrossed with mountain ranges, among which are not a few high and beautiful mountains, such as the steep Huashan Mountain, the majestic Hengshan Mountain, the picturesque Wutai Mountain and the Taibai Mountain.

Huashan Mountain, located south of the Huayin County, is bordered by the Yellow River and the fertile Weihe Plain in the north and the Qinling Mountain Range in the south. The mountain is full of steep cliffs and three high peaks. Its highest peak is the South Peak, some 2,100 metres high above sea level with a stone stairway leading to its top. It is one of the five holy mountains of China, where sacrificial rites have been carried out since the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220).

Hengshan Mountain, situated in Hunyuan County in Shanxi Province, is 2,017 metres above sea level. Although it is nearly as high as Huashan Mountain, it is easier to climb. Hengshan Mountain is also one of the five Holy Mountains.

Wutai Mountain, located in the northeast of Wutai County in Shanxi Province, is one of the four sacred Buddhist mountains, dedicated to Wenshu, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, Manjusri. It is composed of five

peaks, each of them having a flat top like a terrace; hence the name Wutai Mountain, which means the "Five Terraces Mountain". The area outside the five peaks is called the "Outside Terrace Area" and that inside the "Inside Terrace Area". The Inside Terrace Area has Wutai Town as its centre located in a typical basin. Among the five peaks whose heights all exceed 2,500 metres, the north peak is the highest with an elevation rising some 3,058 metres above sea level. With a cool climate there, it begins to snow in August and defrosts in April the following year. The back of the peaks is covered with snow and ice all the year round. As a result, it is cool even during the hottest days of summer; therefore the Wutai Mountain make an ideal summer resort. The mountain has many monasteries and temples frequented by the Buddhist faithful every season of the year.

Taibai Mountain, located in the east of Taibai County in Shaanxi is 3,767 metres high, the highest mountain in the eastern part of China. Its top is capped in a silvery white mantle and hence the name Taibai, which means the "Supreme White". At first sight from a distance, it seems to be covered with snow. In fact, the peak is formed by steep cliffs of granite which reflects the sunshine and creates the illusion of a snow-capped peak. At the main peak, the silver-white top offers a magnificent view. On the mountain slopes there are many sites showing the movement of ancient glaciers.

A vast area, the Loess Plateau has many more picturesque mountains, rivers, lakes and waterfalls besides the famous places of interest mentioned above. **G**

Translated by Gu Weizhou

Train Schedules Xuzhou—Lianyungang

301 O.	289/292 F.T.	243/242 F.T.	227/226 F.T.	Train No. Station	228/225 F.T.	244/241 F.T.	290/291 F.T.	302 O.	338 O.	336 O.
	From Baofu	From Pukou	From Shanghai		To Shanghai	To Pukou	To Baofu			
05:00	06:37	14:58	20:37	Xuzhou	17:44	13:10	18:55	10:14	17:19	03:40
06:29	07:59	16:29	22:01	Pixian	15:38	11:15	17:16	08:50	15:38	02:16
07:19	09:04	17:31	22:51	Xinyi	14:53	10:28	16:29	08:03	14:53	01:31
08:07	09:54	18:50	23:39	Donghai	14:01	09:18	15:36	06:58	14:01	00:38
08:26	—	19:09	—	Baitabu	—	08:52	—	06:34	—	—
08:59	10:43	19:44	00:28	Xinpu	13:15	08:13	14:51	06:07	13:15	23:35
09:20	—	20:06	—	Lianyungang West	12:14	07:42	—	—	12:14	—
09:44	11:39	20:30	01:09	Xugou	11:47	07:18	14:03	05:19	11:47	22:45
09:55	11:50	20:41	01:20	Lianyungang	11:25	07:05	13:50	05:05	11:25	22:30

F.T.—Fast through passenger train
O.—Ordinary passenger train

Train Schedules Zhengzhou—Xi'an—Baofu—Lanzhou

187/186 F.T.	127/126 F.T.	121 F.T.	103/102 F.T.	97 Exp.	69 Exp.	53/52 Exp.	Train No. Station	54/51 Exp.	70 Exp.	98 Exp.	104/101 F.T.	122 F.T.	128/125 F.T.	188/185 F.T.
From Pukou	From Grangzhou	From Beijing	From Qingdao		From Beijing	From Shanghai		To Shanghai	To Beijing		To Qingdao	To Beijing	To Guangzhou	To Pukou
22:00	19:37	06:17	09:07	18:10	21:46	02:54	Zhengzhou	07:25	13:23	21:30	21:00	18:54	06:27	09:52
00:16	21:53	08:40	11:26	20:12	23:47	04:55	Luoyang	05:18	11:16	19:38	18:34	16:33	04:20	07:30
02:53	00:23	11:23	14:12	22:42	02:17	07:25	Sanmenxia West	02:55	08:53	17:15	16:04	13:51	01:54	04:52
04:53	02:15	13:15	16:04	00:34	—	—	Mengyuan	—	—	15:18	14:07	11:43	23:57	02:27
05:53	03:16	14:15	17:05	—	—	—	Weinan	—	—	—	13:03	10:39	22:53	01:23
06:26	—	14:49	17:37	—	—	—	Lintong	—	—	—	12:30	10:07	—	—
07:07	4:22	15:30	18:16	02:32	05:53	11:01	Xi'an	23:18	05:18	13:28	12:02	09:39	21:58	00:28
—	04:52	16:00	18:46	—	—	—	Xianyang	—	—	—	11:23	09:02	21:19	23:49
09:58	07:10	18:58	21:27	05:03	08:32	13:39	Baofu	20:39	02:49	10:57	09:15	06:53	19:08	21:38
13:27	11:12	22:25	00:48	08:03	11:51	16:44	Tianshui	17:46	23:48	07:56	05:46	03:55	15:55	18:19
17:00	15:04	01:45	04:12	10:47	14:35	19:27	Longxi	15:05	20:46	04:57	02:24	23:59	12:23	13:58
18:32	16:53	04:00	06:04	12:41	—	—	Dingxi	—	—	03:10	00:40	22:16	10:43	12:08
21:14	19:24	06:29	08:35	15:16	18:12	23:14	Lanzhou	11:06	16:45	00:59	22:15	19:46	08:25	09:57
		To Xining	To Xining	To Urumqi	To Urumqi	To Urumqi		From Urumqi	From Urumqi	From Urumqi	From Xining	From Xining		

N.B.—Trains No. 103/102 and No. 121 arrive in Lanzhou/Xining on alternate days.
Trains No. 104/101 and No. 122 depart from Lanzhou/Xining on alternate days.

Train Schedules Lanzhou—Turpan—Urumqi

243 F.T.	143 F.T.	113/112 F.T.	97 Exp.	69 Exp.	53/52 Exp.	Train No. Station	54/51 Exp.	70 Exp.	98 Exp.	114/111 F.T.	144 F.T.	244 F.T.
	From Xi'an	From Chengdu	From Zhengzhou	From Beijing	From Shanghai		To Shanghai	To Beijing	To Zhengzhou	To Chengdu	To Xi'an	
22:45	10:56	22:45	15:16	18:12	23:14	Lanzhou	11:06	16:45	00:59	12:14	17:58	11:59
02:08	13:35	02:08	17:52	20:36	01:39	Yongdeng	08:51	14:31	22:45	09:51	15:27	09:51
03:56	15:36	03:56	19:21	22:13	03:11	Dachagou	07:45	13:24	21:39	08:35	14:24	08:35
08:43	20:16	08:43	23:50	02:41	07:36	Wuwu	02:44	08:47	17:02	03:50	09:29	03:50
13:30	01:07	13:30	05:15	07:06	12:02	Shandan	22:41	04:18	12:59	22:04	03:43	22:04
14:41	02:18	14:41	06:31	08:14	13:19	Zhangye	21:22	02:59	11:40	20:45	02:03	20:45
19:10	06:48	19:10	10:48	12:24	17:23	Jiuquan	17:20	22:45	07:24	16:20	21:49	16:20
19:45	07:52	19:45	11:25	12:59	17:58	Jiayuguan	16:46	22:11	06:50	15:40	21:14	15:40
20:43	08:54	20:43	12:25	13:57	19:02	Yumen	16:03	21:26	06:09	14:57	20:30	14:57
23:22	11:19	23:22	15:10	16:32	21:18	Shulehe	13:30	18:25	03:48	12:03	17:17	12:03
02:27	14:24	02:27	17:48	19:13	23:59	Luyuan	11:02	15:33	01:19	09:21	14:14	09:21
08:15	20:27	08:15	22:49	00:18	04:51	Hami	05:35	10:01	19:47	03:19	08:02	03:19
13:53	01:37	13:53	03:49	05:40	09:41	Shanshan	00:23	04:56	15:02	21:41	02:22	21:41
16:43	04:34	16:43	06:21	08:10	12:24	Turpan	21:54	02:19	12:35	19:02	23:44	19:02
20:01	08:00	20:01	09:10	11:15	15:13	Urumqi	18:46	23:00	09:25	15:30	20:20	15:30

N.B.—Trains No. 113/112, 114/111, 143, 144, 243 and 244 depart on alternate days.
Exp.—Express
F.T.—Fast through passenger train

Train Schedules Xuzhou—Shangqiu—Zhengzhou

291/290 F.T.	187/186 F.T.	183/182 F.T.	177/176 F.T.	167/166 F.T.	159/158 F.T.	139/138 F.T.	131/130 F.T.	103/102 F.T.	53/52 Exp.	Train No. Station	54/51 Exp.	104/101 F.T.	132/129 F.T.	140/137 F.T.	160/157 F.T.	168/165 F.T.	178/175 F.T.	184/181 F.T.	188/185 F.T.	292/291 F.T.
From Lianyungang	From Pukou	From Shanghai	From Shanghai	From Shanghai	From Shanghai	From Shanghai	From Hefei	From Qingdao	From Shanghai		To Shanghai	To Qingdao	To Hefei	To Shanghai	To Shanghai	To Shanghai	To Shanghai	To Shanghai	To Pukou	To Lianyungang
18:55	16:07	06:28	08:53	02:56	05:20	17:40	23:20	03:40	21:38	Xuzhou	12:40	02:47	01:09	11:13	04:51	22:09	03:25	01:57	15:12	06:37
20:11	17:23	—	—	04:11	06:35	18:55	—	04:55	—	Dangshan	—	01:10	—	—	03:24	20:45	01:50	00:34	13:49	05:11
21:23	18:43	08:38	11:14	05:14	07:39	20:01	01:30	06:05	23:48	Shangqiu	10:25	00:00	22:36	08:50	02:24	19:45	00:52	23:33	12:51	03:51
23:18	20:38	10:26	13:02	07:02	09:34	22:03	03:18	07:53	01:41	Kaifeng	08:30	22:05	20:40	06:40	00:29	17:45	23:00	21:38	10:57	01:49
00:38	22:00	11:40	14:15	08:00	10:48	23:16	04:38	09:07	02:54	Zhengzhou	07:25	21:00	19:35	05:35	23:24	16:40	21:57	20:33	09:52	00:38
To Baofu	To Lanzhou	To Chengdu	To Xining	To Luoyang	To Xi'an	To Chengdu	To Xining	To Urumqi	To Urumqi		From Urumqi	From Lanzhou	From Chengdu	From Xi'an	From Luoyang		From Xining	From Chengdu	From Lanzhou	From Baofu

Flights to and from Xi'an

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Xulin — Xi'an	1 2 5 6 7	15:05	16:30	WH2266
Xi'an — Xulin	1 2 5 6 7	13:05	14:35	WH2265
Yan'an — Xi'an	4 7	16:35 10:05	17:35 11:05	WH2230 WH2226
Xi'an — Yan'an	4 7	07:30 08:35	08:30 09:35	WH2229 WH2225
Hong Kong — Xi'an	4 7	10:40	14:00	CZ3022
Xi'an — Hong Kong	4 7	08:15	09:50	CZ3021

(Valid Winter 1991 — Spring 1992)

Bus Service from Tongren in Guizhou Province

Route	Departure	Distance (km)
Tongren-Jiangkou	05:20-15:30 (4 runs)	49
Tongren-Songtao	07:00/13:30	91
Tongren-Yuping	06:00-16:00 (8 runs)	82

Flights to and from Guangzhou

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Lianyungang — Guangzhou	4	13:50	16:35	MU5303
Guangzhou — Lianyungang	4	17:15	19:45	MU5304
Xi'an — Guangzhou	2	08:10	10:20	WH2323
	6	20:20	22:30	CZ3298
	7	08:10	10:20	WH2307
	4 7	15:10	16:20	CZ3206
	1 3 5	14:50	17:00	WH3205
Guangzhou — Xi'an	1 3 5	08:10	10:15	WH2321
	2 4 6 7	07:50	10:00	WH2303
	2	16:15	18:30	WH2324
	3	13:50	18:00	WH2302
	6 7	17:25	19:40	CZ3297
Kunming — Guangzhou	1 3 5	11:10	13:35	WH2308
	1 3 5	17:50	20:05	WH2306
	2 4 6 7	17:15	19:30	WH2322
	2 4 6 7	17:55	20:15	WH2304
	3	09:40	11:30	CZ4371
Guangzhou — Kunming	4	07:30	09:15	CZ4383
	4	12:30	14:20	CZ4387
	7	18:10	21:00	CZ3402
	7	15:40	17:30	CZ3472
	1 2 3 5 6 7	16:40	18:40	CZ3410
Zhengzhou — Guangzhou	1 3 5 7	15:10	16:50	SZ4341
	1 2 3 5 7	07:30	09:15	SZ4381
	3	12:10	14:05	SZ4372
	4	14:35	16:35	SZ4384
	4	15:00	16:50	SZ4388
Guangzhou — Zhengzhou	7	14:20	17:20	CZ3401
	7	13:00	14:50	CZ3471
	1 2 3 5 6 7	07:55	09:45	CZ3409
	1 3 5 7	17:25	19:15	SZ4342
	1 2 3 5 7	05:55	11:04	SZ4382
Lanzhou — Guangzhou	3	08:00	12:30	ZY357
	4	10:30	12:20	CZ3392
	6	14:30	16:20	CZ3394
	7	20:30	22:20	CZ3398
	3	13:20	17:50	ZY358
Guangzhou — Lanzhou	4	07:45	09:40	CZ3391
	6	11:40	13:30	CZ3393
	7	11:50	13:40	CZ3397
	3	08:40	13:00	WH2301
	4 6 7	14:30	17:05	WH2311
Urumqi — Guangzhou	3	13:50	19:55	WH2302
	4 6 7	11:00	13:50	WH2312
	1 3 5 7	09:35	14:00	XO9301
	1 3 5 7	14:50	19:45	XO9302
	2	10:00	10:40	CZ302
Hong Kong — Guangzhou	3 4 5 6 7	17:50	18:30	CZ320
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	11:50	12:30	CZ304
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	19:45	20:30	CZ306
	2	08:30	09:00	CZ301
	3 4 5 6 7	08:25	09:00	CZ319
Guangzhou — Hong Kong	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	10:20	10:55	CZ303
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	18:20	18:55	CZ305

(Valid Winter 1991 — Spring 1992)

Bus Service in Yunnan Province

Route	Departure	Distance (km)	Main Station
Kunming-Simao	07:30	550	Yuxi, Mojiang, Pu'er
Kunming-Jinghong	07:30	742	Yuxi, Simao
Kunming-Mengla	07:30	863	Yuxi, Simao, Jinghong
Simao-Menglian	08:00	393	Jinghong, Menghai
Simao-Mengla	07:30	286	—
Simao-Jinghong	08:30	162	—
Simao-Menglong	07:30	227	Jinghong
Jinghong-Kunming	07:30	740	Simao, Tongguan, Yuxi
Jinghong-Simao	08:00/14:30	163	—
Jinghong-Daluo	07:30	109	—
Jinghong-Mengla	08:00	193	—
Jinghong-Menghai	09:00	53	—

Bus Service in Gansu, Ningxia & Inner Mongolia

Route	Departure	Distance (km)	Main Station
Yinchuan-Bayan Hot	06:00-15:00 (6 runs)	112	Xincheng, Pingjipu, Touguan
Bayan Hot-Yinchuan	06:30-16:00 (7 runs)	101	Yaoba, Changliushui
Jiuquan-Ejin Banner	07:00	395	Jinta

Bus Service from Xi'an / Yan'an / Yulin in Northern Shaanxi Province

Route	Departure	Distance (km)	Main Station
Xi'an-Tongchuan	06:00-18:00 (17 runs)	122	Yaodian
Xi'an-Yan'an	07:00/07:40/11:30	368	Tongchuan, Luochuan
Yulin-Xi'an	05:30/06:00	634	Suide, Yan'an, Tongchuan
Yulin-Tongchuan	05:30/06:00	558	Suide, Yan'an, Luochuan
Yulin-Yan'an	06:00/06:30	312	Suide, Qingjian
Yulin-Jiadan	06:30/12:30 (4 runs)	95	—
Yan'an-Xi'an	05:30/12:00 (5 runs)	371	Ganquan, Luochuan, Tongchuan
Yan'an-Tongchuan	08:30/10:00/11:00	246	Ganquan, Luochuan
Yan'an-Huangling	14:00	171	Ganquan, Chafang, Luochuan
Yan'an-Luochuan	15:00	130	Ganquan, Chafang
Yan'an-Yichuan	11:00	160	Ganquan, Chafang
Yan'an-Yichuan	07:30	144	Nanniwan, Linzhen
Yan'an-Yulin	05:30/06:30	312	Yongping, Mizhi
Yan'an-Jianxian	06:30	300	Suide, Mizhi

Mount Fanjing on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau

Mount Fanjing, located in the subtropical region in Guizhou Province, has been fortunate to preserve a great number of species of animals and plants from the Tertiary and Quaternary Periods dating some 70 million to two million years ago. Here a complete subtropical ecosystem which is rare today in the world has been maintained. The mountain has become a nature reserve having a total area of about 40,000 hectares.

The complicated terrain and warm, humid and changeable climate here provide favourable conditions for the growth of subtropical broadleaf forests which have nurtured a great number of rare animals and plants. The most characteristic plant of the

area is the dove tree, details of which are provided in a previous article in this issue. A number of medicinal herbs are also indigenous to the area.

The rare and ancient animals found in the mountain include 319 species of terrestrial vertebrates, among which 68 species are mammals and 30 species are listed under state-level protection. The rarest ones are the golden monkey, the giant salamander, the clouded leopard and the South China tiger. The golden monkey, an endangered species, originated in the same period contemporary with the giant panda.

The mountain is composed of towering peaks rising to nearly 2,500 metres above

sea level. Its main summit, Jinding (Golden Peak), was formerly a sacred Buddhist site and today many of the remains of temples erected in past ages can still be seen there. The composition of beautiful natural scenery and ancient man-made sites has turned the reserve into a major tourist spot.

One may ascend the mountain by three different ways. The first is to take the bus from either Huaihua in Hunan or Guiyang in Guizhou to Xinhuang or Yuping, then proceed to Jiangkou from where one goes northward following the Taiping River to the mouth of the Heiwan River and thence up the eastern slope of the mountain to Jinding. This is the route scientific investigators usually take. Going upstream via the Heiwan River one reaches the primeval forest zone. Then the visitor comes to Xiaoheiwán where large stretches of dove trees can be found. Every year in May during the flowering season a beautiful scene appears when the dove flowers with their large blooms dot the trees like flocks of white doves. The ascending point to Wanbao Rock is about ten kilometres from Xiaoheiwán. Half a kilometre further upward from Wanbao Rock brings you to the foot of Jinding. Even though this sounds complicated this is the easiest way.

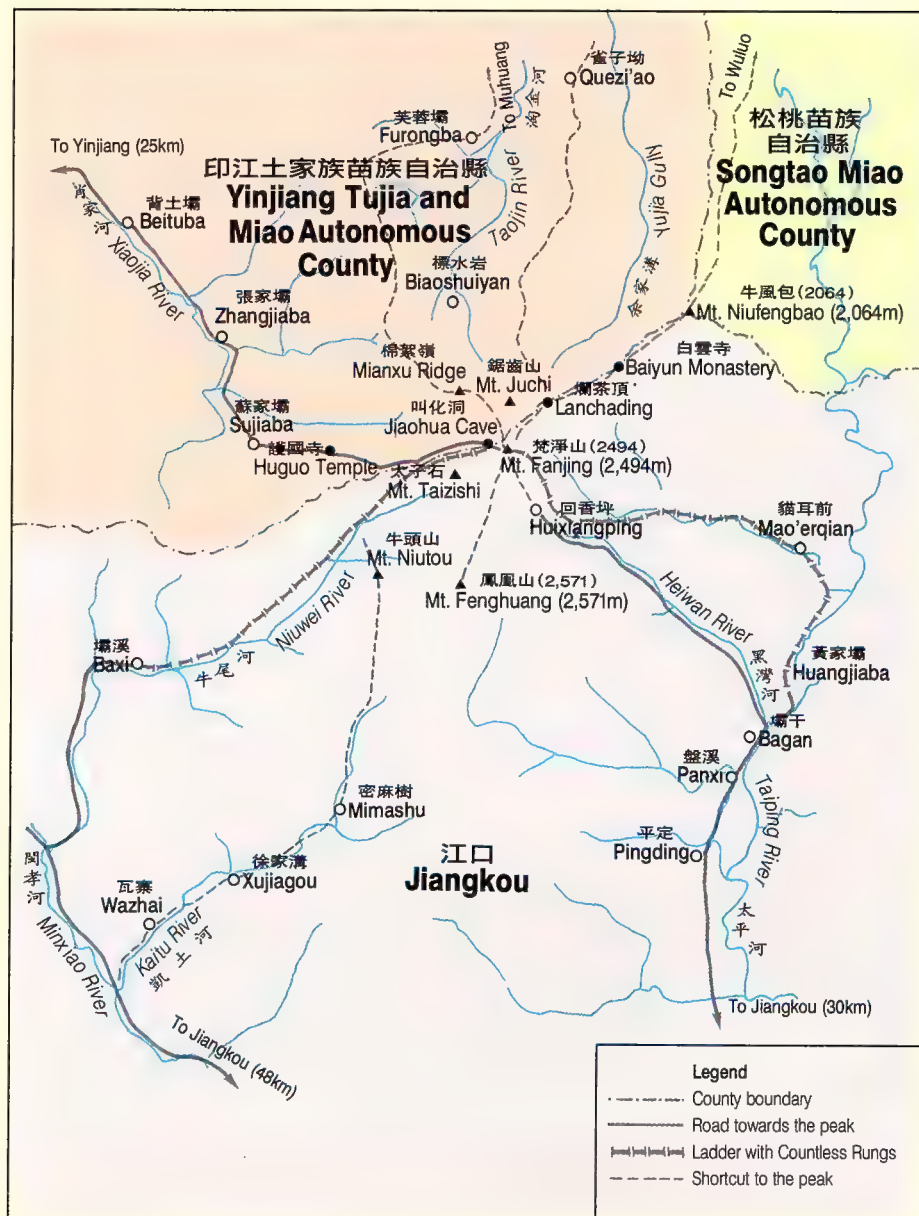
The second way is to take the bus from either Xinhuang or Yuping to Yinjiang, then on to Zhangjiaba about 30 kilometres to the east and up the western slope to the ruins of the Huguo Temple.

A little way at the front of this former temple site there is also a large stretch of dove trees. From there upward are the remains of the Zhongling Temple at an altitude of 1,700 metres. From here a path along the steep ridge leads to the Jiandao (Scissors) Gorge which is formed by two rocks resembling a pair of scissors. Once past the Scissor Gorge the path continues to Fantai Terrace via Jiaohua (Beggar) Cave. Then after heading south around the foot of the Old Jinding the path ends at the base of the Golden Peak.

The third way is to take the bus northward from Yinjiang to the old town of Mu Huang 60 kilometres away, then travel along the Mu Huang River to Huangrongba finally scaling the mountain on its northern slope.

For an interesting diversion the visitor can also make a detour from Tangjiayuan after arriving at the Jiaohua Cave to Taojin (Penning) River for a visit to the Biaoshui Rock Waterfall.

Translated by K. V. Ku





CAAC Plans More Flights

As part of the Visit China '92 promotion, fourteen special tour routes will be launched. From April to October the number of weekly flights is planned to reach more than 4,200 carrying more than 500,000 seats — an increase of 24 per cent and 28 per cent respectively over the same period a year ago. This increase in service is planned to cope with the increased number of tourists expected to observe the 134 festivals to be celebrated throughout the entire country.



Hotel News

The Beijing Asia Hotel, situated at 8 Xinzhong Xijie, Gongti Beilu, Beijing, is offering winter rates of US\$60 (+15%) per night valid from November 16, 1991 to March 31, 1992. This special offer includes entry to the hotel's karaoke bar and discotheque, free use of gym, late check-out until 4p.m., complimentary stay for second night and free stay for child under 12 with parents.



Changsha-Guizhou Air Route

A new weekly air route between Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province and Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou Province has been inaugurated.



Tourist Attractions of Golmud

The city of Golmud, located in the Qaidam Basin in the northeastern part of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, has opened the following tourist routes: Adventure on the Roof of the World, Silk Road, Adventure Route of Marco Polo and The Route to Seek Taoist Ancestors in the Kunlun Mountains. Other tourist interest sites include June Snow on the Great Kunlun Mountains, Green Waves of the Salt Lake and the Great Salt Bridge. It is only recently that the city, which is on the Qinghai-Tibetan Highway, has started to develop a tourist industry.



Liao-Dynasty Polo Players

Among the finds from a recently excavated tomb of the Liao dynasty (916-1125) was a wall painting 1.5 metres long and half a metre high. This tomb is located in the village of Banshan, Baogutu, in the Aohan Banner in Inner Mongolia. Around thirty murals have been found in tombs of comparable age in Inner Mongolia so far, but this is a first in one sense owing to its subject matter — men engaged in a game of polo, which was regarded as intensifying fighting skills as well as a sport.



Third China Art Festival in Yunnan

The Third Annual China Art Festival will be held from February 18 to March 3 in Yunnan. Some 2,100 singers, dancers and performers, native and foreign alike, will stage some 36 performances such as folk singing and dancing, plays and dance dramas, Beijing operas and other kinds of local operas to acrobatics. More than 8,000 professional or amateur actors and actresses from all 56 nationalities, including the Han nationality, will be present at the opening ceremony to give a mass display of folk singing and dancing.

There will also be many large recreational activities at numerous theatres and parks at Kunming, the capital of Yunnan. The province also plans to promote local industry, as two trade fairs of industrial and agricultural products will be held. In addition, there will be special fairs for ethnic dresses, typical local dishes, handicrafts and Chinese paintings and calligraphy.

The festival will also serve as the opening of a series of cultural and art exhibitions and an exhibit of fossils and cultural relics of Yunnan's long history.



Cultural Festival of the Round Fortified Residences

Yongding County in Fujian Province is organizing a festival during June with a focus on the Fortified Round Residences of its native Hakkas. Historians, geographers and ethnologists will find the events interesting as the homes and apparel of Hakka culture will be on display for the whole world to see.



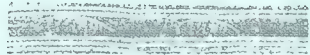
Longshan Culture Site in Shandong

Ruins of a city thought to date back more than 4,600 years may represent one of the earliest centres of the Xia Dynasty, according to archaeologists. Belonging to the Longshan Culture, the ruins include city walls and foundations, and are located 25 kilometres east of Jinan, the provincial capital of Shandong. Part of the Chengziya site, the roughly square city covered an area of 200,000 square metres.



The Swan Cave in Fujian Province

One of the largest karst caves in Fujian Province has been opened as a tourist venture near the township of Hucun, twenty kilometres east of Ninghua in a place inhabited by Hakkas. With an area of ten square kilometres it is divided into three levels of seven halls in which nature has fashioned the most splendid fantasies in stone.



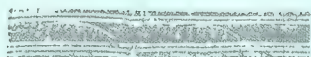
Yingkou Port Zone Approved

Located on the western side of the Liaodong Peninsula in Liaoning Province, the port city of Yingkou is hoping for increased foreign investment with the establishment of its Xingang Economic Zone. This zone, which is to replace the old Bayuquan Export Processing Zone, will eventually cover 140 square kilometres. The first stage will involve 5.2 square kilometres.



Medicinal Tour at Anguo

Anguo, in Hebei Province, is internationally renowned for collecting and processing traditional Chinese medicine. With this tradition as the "Medicine Capital", this year the city plans to stage special tourism activities based on the history of the local medicine industry. Highlighting the programme will be the Anguo International Medicinal Festival. There will be an introduction to the planting, production and history of traditional Chinese medicinal herbs; visits to famous medicine processing factories and the museum of traditional Chinese medicine.



More Cities and Counties Opened to Foreigners

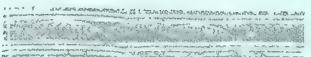
Fourteen additional Chinese cities and counties have been opened to foreigners, bringing the total number accessible to foreign visitors to 747. They are Yuanjiang Hani-Yi-Dai Autonomous County, Mojiang Hani Autonomous County, Jinggu Dai-Yi Autonomous County, Pu'er Hani-Yi Autonomous County, Luliang, Xuanwei, Luoping, Shizong and Fuyuan Counties in Yunnan Province, Guangshui City, Laifeng, Hefeng and Dawu Counties in Hubei Province and Hunchun City in Jilin Province.



Pheasant Hunting

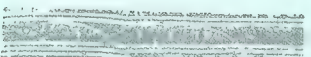
A new tourist site in Heilongjiang Province is the Qingsong Pheasant Preserve, the first such hunting ground in the country. Situated some 50 kilometres northwest of Qiqihar City, the 4,600-hectare preserve houses over 3,000 pheasants for year-round hunting.

Overseas experts consider the facilities provided at the Qingsong Pheasant Preserve of a standard high enough to make it a world class pheasant hunting ground.



Weifang Annual Kite Festival

The city of Weifang in Shandong Province will stage its ninth international kite festival beginning on April 20, 1992. Included in the festival, which attracts kite enthusiasts from all over the world will be large-scale dance performances, a kite competition, various individual competitions, a lantern festival, Beijing opera, tours of local scenic spots, a food fair and an exhibition of industrial goods.



A New "Qin Dynasty Palace" at Beidaihe

A "Qin Palace", a replica of the Epang Palace built by Emperor Qin Shihuang, will be constructed at Beidaihe in Hebei Province. The Epang Palace, the Great Wall, the conquest of the Six Kingdoms and the assassination of Qin Shihuang by Jing Ke will all be presented in 24 halls at a 3,700-square-metre exposition site, recalling China's ancient history.



CHINA-WIDE SPECIAL (II)

In this issue, we conclude our China-Wide Special editions by exploring the areas which are seldom on tourist itineraries, but which have a charm and history all their own.



Travelling Diary in the West



A Visit to Shengze

The Yellow River in Shanxi



Twenty-Four Hours in the China Folk Culture Villages

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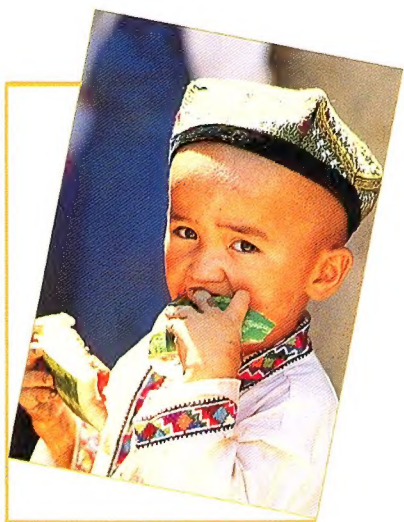
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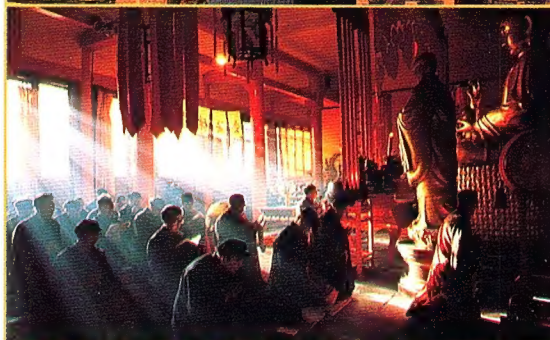
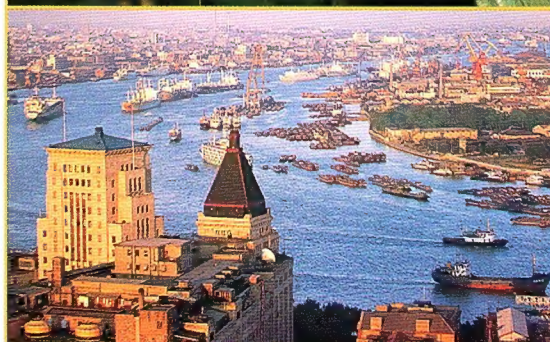
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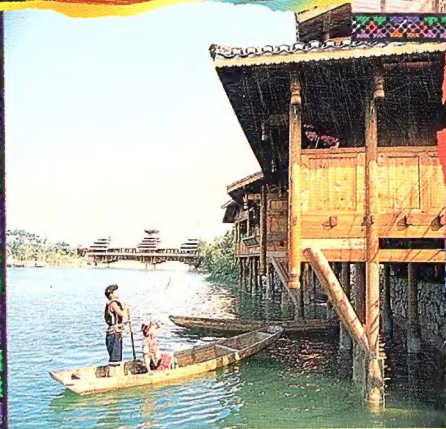
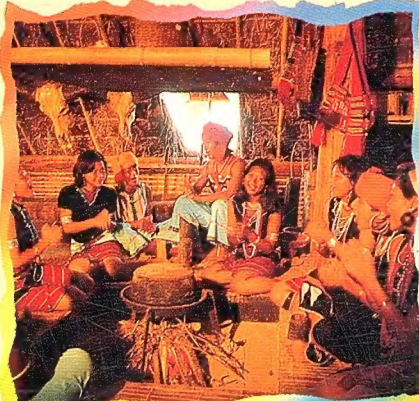
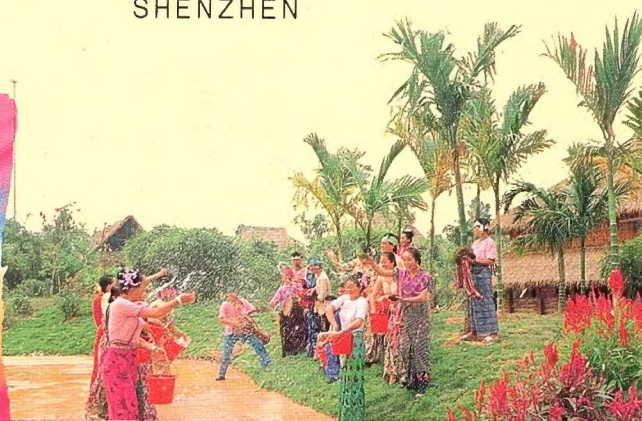
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中國民俗文化村

China Folk Culture Villages

SHENZHEN

With an area of 180,000 square metres, China Folk Culture Villages is adjacent to "Splendid China" Scenic Spot. Built in the Villages are 24 villages of China's minority nationalities who are living in Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Tibet, Hunan, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, etc. as well as more than 20 well-known scenic spots, which are all built on the scale of 1:1. Here you can enjoy the performance of folk song and dance, and folk acrobatics presented by a few hundred minority artists. You will also get some idea of folk arts, and customs and lives of China's various minority nationalities.



- * China Folk Culture Villages consisting of the world's largest number of minority nationalities
- * The world's largest man-made stone forest, banyan, waterfall, cave and the largest laser folk music fountain in the world
- * Appreciating all kinds of folk customs and local conditions
- * Enjoying primitive, graceful song and dance
- * Having a taste of unique flavour of local snacks and delicacies
- * A grand "Folk Arts Parade" held each day
- * Folk festive celebrations held each month



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